A U M

Do not believe that lust can ever be killed out if gratified or satiated, for this is an abomination inspired by Mara. It is by feeding vice that it expands and waxes strong, like to the worm that fattens on the blossom's heart.—*Voice of the Silence.*

THEOSOPHY

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THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

CHAPTER XVI.

DEVOTION THROUGH DISCRIMINATING BETWEEN GODLIKE AND DEMONIACAL NATURES.

BY A STUDENT OF W. Q. J.

IN this chapter Krishna begins with an enumeration of the "godlike" qualities. It will be noted that these qualities or virtues are not so numerous as they are comprehensive and complementary, and that, taken as a whole, they fully express the title under which they are assembled—a godlike nature.

When we come to examine these qualities from the modern point of view and compare one with another, we may find it difficult to reconcile some with others: as for instance, "power" and "fearlessness" with "freedom from conceit". Our individualistic tendencies incline us to think that a sense of superiority is necessarily present with power and the absence of fear. And again, if we take the simplest, most definite and most easily understood of these qualities, "not speaking of the faults of others", we see only a pale and negative virtue. Yet fault-finding is the most universal and most insidious expression of conceit and self-assertion. Speaking of and pointing out the faults of others is a vice which masquerades under many forms of virtue but in reality it is used to hide our own faults and present the appearance of a righteousness we do not possess—a vice which perpetuates self-delusion and negatives every apparent virtue. St. Paul, the Initiate, in I. Corinthians, Chap. XIII, says in this regard:

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge;

and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

Charity implies the possession of all the virtues, for they are all included in it; it implies the absence of fault-finding and condemnation. But charity is not negative; that which makes charity effective is knowledge, not sentiment; hence the need of discriminating between what are here called "godlike" and "demoniacal" natures.

We must therefore enquire into the meaning of Discrimination. It is a faculty, or power, whose range and value depend entirely upon the knowledge and understanding of the individual using it. All men use this faculty but in as many different degrees as exist between the densest ignorance and the highest intelligence and wisdom. It may be called the ability to do the right thing, at the right time, and in the right place, on every plane of action. This necessitates a universal point of view, an understanding that covers the whole of nature, and a universal application of both.

The ancient wisdom of the Gita begins with universals and descends into particulars, this being the course of evolution. It posits One Spirit as animating all beings and all forms, and shows the universe to consist of an aggregation of evolved beings of innumerable grades, each with its own form and tendencies, and each acting according to its own *acquired nature*. Whatever accords with the acquired nature of each being, will appear to it as good; whatever obstructs or opposes it, will appear as evil; this being true, it is self-evident that good and evil are not things in themselves, but are appearances due to the attitude of the perceiver towards things, forms, conditions and circumstances.

No such considerations as the above could be addressed to any being lower than Man, because he alone, of all those in physical forms, has reached that point of development of his acquired nature which enables him to grasp that which is above, as well as that which is below, and permits him to extend his range of perceptions in all directions. He has reached that point at which he can know himself to be Immortal, and may, if he wills, bring his acquired nature in accord with his own spiritual nature. All of his perceptions are of the "pairs of opposites"; without these he could never find himself, nor understand the natures of those who are struggling to free themselves from the binding force of self-identification with forms and conditions.

It must be understood that Man, the Eternal Pilgrim, is not his perceptions, for they are always relative. In all perceptions are to be found "the pairs of opposites", for no perception could exist without them. Without darkness, there could be no perception of light; without pain, there could be no perception of pleasure; without sorrow, there could be no perception of joy; without sin, there

could be no perception of holiness. That these perceptions are all relative to the Perceiver is shown in the fact that what is light to some is darkness to others; pleasure to some is pain to others; joy to some is sorrow to others; holiness to some is sin to others.

It is the lack of understanding of these facts in nature that produces every kind of "demoniacal nature", and there are many kinds. There are those who "know not the nature of action nor of cessation from action"; those who "deny that the universe has any truth in it, saying it is not governed by law, declaring that it hath no Spirit"; those who "seek by injustice and the accumulation of wealth for the gratification of their own lusts and appetites"; there are those who esteem "themselves very highly, self-willed, and full of pride, ever in pursuit of riches, they perform worship with hypocrisy and not even according to ritual (that which is known) but only for outward show; indulging in pride, selfishness, ostentation, power, lust and anger, they detest me (the One Spirit) who am in their bodies and in the bodies of others." What an arraignment this is of present day religions and systems of thought! All sects present formulas which must be accepted on faith, but which cannot be proved to be true. Many systems of thought affirm the unproven and unprovable and deny the obvious facts of experience, thus ignoring law and justice in the universe; they deny the effects they perceive, on one side of nature, and affirm as self-existent the effects they perceive of an opposite kind, deluding themselves by offsetting one effect against the other, and never perceiving the Cause of both effects. None of these religions and systems of thought as represented by their adherents have the faintest suspicion that they are but repetitions of the errors of past times and peoples; yet such is the fact known to every student of ancient literatures, religions and sciences, who has gained discrimination by means of "the pairs of opposites."

As before said, true discrimination proceeds from a universal point of view, an understanding that covers the whole of nature, and a universal application of both. The universal point of view is that all manifested nature, including all things below Man, Man himself, and all beings above Man, as well as all forms, degrees of substance, and elements have proceeded from one Source, the One Spirit. The understanding comes from a realization that, from atom to the highest being, each is an expression of that One Spirit; and that from the faintest glimmering of perception in the lowest kingdom to the heights of Divine Knowledge, the path is the same for all under Law. Then comes the application of the knowledge gained.

The student must raise himself beyond "the influence of the pairs of opposites." He must see that these are but the means and modes necessary to give him ever-widening perception, and he must realize that he is the Perceiver and not any nor all of his perceptions. And as he raises himself above that influence, he will find others

like himself, and still others beyond who are of a godlike nature—who love and understand; who possess what appear to others as virtues, but which to them are but actions with spiritual knowledge as director; who understand the vices of men to be due to ignorance and not to innate wickedness; and who hence have patience, power and fortitude, universal compassion, modesty and mildness. They know that that which makes for evil can be turned into that which makes for good; that which makes for destructiveness can be turned into that which makes for constructiveness; that which makes for separation and selfishness can be turned into that which makes for unity and selflessness. So knowing, all nature is theirs, every power and element in it are their instruments; not that the relativities of good and evil can or should be destroyed, but that the spiritual identity of all beings shall be realized at every stage, and only such thought and action prevail as will bring about a harmonious progress towards perfection.

True Discrimination distinguishes between good, evil, and mixed natures. It knows that all human beings are *inherently* perfectible, and that the imperfections exist only in the lower *acquired* nature; that while this acquired nature exhibits itself in actions, its root lies in tendencies fostered by limited and erroneous conceptions. The effort is therefore not expended in classifications of comparative good and evil, nor is there any condemnation of any being because of the state in which he is found to be; but the causes that have led up to each state are shown, the right basis for thought and action is given, the landmarks upon the "small old path" that leads far beyond comparative good and evil are pointed out, and the pilgrim patiently helped, on every step of the way.

QUESTION ABOUT SOUNDS*

It has been said that all sounds are still in existence, and that if we could rise high enough we would be able to hear every sound that has ever been produced. If this be true, would not the intermingling of so many sounds only produce a roar as of thunder?

William Q. Judge.—This is not a profitable query theosophical. The FORUM is not for scientific replies, but for theosophical discussion. This question relates solely to natural physical laws. Science deals with it and says the resultant sound would be a harmonious tone. Questioner should read books on vibrations of air; music; sound-waves; and consult practical scientific men on this question. Suppose the FORUM replied "No," or "Yes," to the question, what would be the effect on theosophical doctrines? Nothing at all, and no advance made either way.

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* This answer by Mr. Judge to the question asked was first printed in *The Theosophical Forum* for January, 1896. The title used is our own. [ED. THEOSOPHY.]

CHRISTMAS THEN AND CHRISTMAS NOW*

WE are reaching the time of the year when the whole Christian world is preparing to celebrate the most noted of its solemnities—the birth of the Founder of their religion. When this paper reaches its Western subscribers there will be festivity and rejoicing in every house. In North Western Europe and in America the holly and ivy will decorate each home, and the churches be decked with evergreens; a custom derived from the ancient practices of the pagan Druids "that sylvan spirits might flock to the evergreens, and remain un-nipped by frost till a milder season." In Roman Catholic countries large crowds flock during the whole evening and night of "Christmas-eve" to the churches, to salute waxen images of the divine Infant, and his Virgin mother, in her garb of "Queen of Heaven." To an analytical mind, this bravery of rich gold and lace, pearl-broidered satin and velvet, and the bejewelled cradle do seem rather paradoxical. When one thinks of the poor, worm-eaten, dirty manger of the Jewish country-inn, in which, if we must credit the Gospel, the future "Redeemer" was placed at his birth for lack of a better shelter, we cannot help suspecting that before the dazzled eyes of the unsophisticated devotee the Bethlehem stable vanishes altogether. To put it in the mildest terms, this gaudy display tallies ill with the democratic feelings and the truly divine contempt for riches of the "Son of Man," who had "not where to lay his head." It makes it all the harder for the average Christian to regard the explicit statement that—"it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven" as anything more than a rhetorical threat. The Roman Church acted wisely in severely forbidding her parishioners to either read or interpret the Gospels for themselves, and leaving the Book, as long as it was possible, to proclaim its truths in Latin—"the voice of one crying in the wilderness." In that, she but followed the wisdom of the ages—the wisdom of the old Aryans, which is also "justified of her children;" for, as neither the modern Hindu devotee understands a word of the Sanskrit, nor the modern Parsi one syllable of the Zend, so for the average Roman Catholic the Latin is no better than Hieroglyphics. The result is that all the three—Brahmanical High Priest, Zoroastrian Mobed, and Roman Catholic Pontiff, are allowed unlimited opportunities for evolving new religious dogmas out of the depths of their own fancy, for the benefit of their respective churches.

To usher in this great day the bells are set merrily ringing at midnight, throughout England and the Continent. In France and

* This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Theosophist* for December, 1879.

Italy, after the celebration of the mass in churches magnificently decorated, "it is usual, for the revellers to partake of a collation *(reveillon)* that *they may be better able to sustain the fatigues of the night,*" saith a book treating upon Popish church ceremonials. This night of Christian fasting reminds one of the *Sivaratree* of the followers of the god Siva,—the great day of gloom and fasting, in the 11th month of the Hindu year. Only, with the latter, the night's long vigil is preceded and followed by a strict and rigid fasting. No *reveillons* or compromises for them. True, they are but wicked "heathens," and therefore their way to salvation must be tenfold harder.

Though now universally observed by Christian nations as the anniversary of the birth of Jesus, the 25th of December was not originally so accepted. The most movable of the Christian feast days, during the early centuries, Christmas was often confounded with the Epiphany, and celebrated in the months of April and May. As there never was any authentic record, or proof of its identification, whether in secular or ecclesiastical history, the selection of that day long remained optional; and it was only during the 4th century that, urged by Cyril of Jerusalem, the Pope (Julius I.) ordered the bishops to make an investigation and come finally to *some* agreement as to the *presumable* date of the nativity of Christ. Their choice fell upon the 25th day of December,—and a most unfortunate choice it has since proved! It was Dupuis, followed by Volney, who aimed the first shots at this natal anniversary. They proved that for incalculable periods before our era, upon very clear astronomical data, nearly all the ancient peoples had celebrated the births of their sun-gods on that very day. "Dupuis shows that the celestial sign of the VIRGIN AND CHILD was in existence several thousand years before Christ"—remarks Higgins in his *Anacalypsis.* As Dupuis, Volney, and Higgins have all been passed over to posterity as infidels, and enemies of Christianity, it may be as *well* to quote in this relation, the confessions of the Christian Bishop of Ratisbone, "the most learned man that the middle ages produced" —the Dominican, Albertus Magnus. "The sign of the celestial Virgin rises above the horizon at the moment in *which we fix the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ,*" he says, in the *Recherches historiques sur Falaise, par Langevin prêtre.* So Adonis, Bacchus, Osiris, Apollo, etc., were all born on the 25th of December. Christmas comes just at the time of the winter solstice; the days then are shortest, and *Darkness* is more upon the face of the earth than ever. All the sun-gods were believed to be annually born at that epoch; for from this time its Light dispels more and more darkness with each succeeding day, and the power of the *Sun* begins to increase.

However it may be, the Christmas festivities that were held by the Christians for nearly fifteen centuries, were of a particularly pagan character. Nay, we are afraid that even the present cere-

monies of the church can hardly escape the reproach of being almost literally copied from the mysteries of Egypt and Greece, held in honour of Osiris and Horus, Apollo and Bacchus. Both Isis and Ceres were called "Holy Virgins," and a DIVINE BABE may be found in every "heathen" religion. We will now draw two pictures of the Merrie Christmas; one portraying the "good old times," and the other the present state of Christian worship. From the first days of its establishment as Christmas the day was regarded in the double light of a holy commemoration and a most cheerful festivity: it was equally given up to devotion and insane merriment. "Among the revels of the Christmas season were the so-called feasts of fools and of asses, grotesque saturnalia, which were termed 'December liberties,' in which everything serious was burlesqued, the order of society reversed, and its decencies ridiculed" —says one compiler of old chronicles. "During the Middle Ages, it was celebrated by the gay fantastic spectacle of dramatic mysteries, performed by personages in grotesque masks and singular costumes. The show usually represented an infant in a cradle, surrounded by the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph, by bulls' heads, cherubs, Eastern Magi, (the Mobeds of old) and manifold ornaments." The custom of singing canticles at Christmas, called Carols, was to recall the songs of the shepherds at the Nativity. "The bishops and the clergy often joined with the populace in carolling, and the songs were enlivened by dances, and by the music of tambours, guitars, violins and organs. . . " We may add that down to the present times, during the days preceding Christmas, such mysteries are being enacted, with marionettes and dolls, in Southern Russia, Poland, and Galicia; and known as the *Kalidowki.* In Italy, Calabrian minstrels descend from their mountains to Naples and Rome, and crowd the shrines of the Virgin-Mother, cheering her with their wild music.

In England, the revels used to begin on Christmas eve, and continue often till Candlemas (Feb. 2), every day being a holiday till Twelfth-night (Jan. 6). In the houses of great nobles a "lord of misrule," or "abbot of unreason" was appointed, whose duty it was to play the part of a buffoon. "The larder was filled with capons, hens, turkeys, geese, ducks, beef, mutton, pork, pies, puddings, nuts, plums, sugar and honey" . . . "A glowing fire, made of great logs, the principal of which was termed the 'Yule log,' or Christmas block, which might be burnt till Candlemas eve, kept out the cold; and the abundance was shared by the lord's tenants "amid music, conjuring, riddles, hot-cockles, fool-plough, snap-dragon, jokes, laughter, repartees, forfeits and dances."

In our modern times, the bishops and the clergy join no more with the populace in open carolling and dancing; and feasts of "fools and of asses" are enacted more in sacred privacy than under the eyes of the dangerous, argus-eyed reporter. Yet the eating and drinking festivities are preserved throughout the Christian

world; and, more sudden deaths are doubtless caused by gluttony and intemperance during the Christmas and Easter holidays, than at any other time of the year. Yet, Christian worship becomes every year more and more a false pretence. The heartlessness of this lip-service has been denounced innumerable times, but never, we think, with a more affecting touch of realism than in a charming dream-tale, which appeared in the *New York Herald* about last Christmas. An aged man, presiding at a public meeting, said he would avail himself of the opportunity to relate a vision he had witnessed on the previous night. "He thought he was standing in the pulpit of the most gorgeous and magnificent cathedral he had ever seen. Before him was the priest or pastor of the church, and beside him stood an angel with a tablet and pencil in hand, whose mission it was to make record of every act of worship or prayer that transpired in his presence and ascended as an acceptable offering to the throne of God. Every pew was filled with richly-attired worshippers of either sex. The most sublime music that ever fell on his enraptured ear filled the air with melody. All the beautiful ritualistic Church services, including a surpassingly eloquent sermon from the gifted minister, had in turn transpired, and yet the recording angel made no entry in his tablet! The congregation were at length dismissed by the pastor with a lengthy and beautifully-worded prayer, followed by a benediction, and yet the angel made no sign!

"Attended by the angel, the speaker left the door of the church in rear of the richly-attired congregation. A poor, tattered castaway stood in the gutter beside the curbstone, with her pale, famished hand extended, silently pleading for alms. As the richly-attired worshippers from the church passed by, they shrank from the poor Magdalen, the ladies withdrawing aside their silken, jewel-bedecked robes, lest they should be polluted by her touch.

"Just then an intoxicated sailor came reeling down the sidewalk on the other side. When he got opposite the poor forsaken girl, he staggered across the street to where she stood, and, taking a few pennies from his pocket, he thrust them into her hand, accompanied with the adjuration, 'Here, you poor forsaken cuss, take this!' A celestial radiance now lighted up the face of the recording angel, who instantly entered the sailor's act of sympathy and charity in his tablet, and departed with it as a sweet sacrifice to God."

A concretion, one might say, of the Biblical story of the judgment upon the woman taken in adultery. Be it so; yet it portrays with a master hand the state of our Christian society.

According to tradition, on Christmas-eve, the oxen may always be found on their knees, as though in prayer and devotion; and, "there was a famous hawthorn in the churchyard of Glastonbury Abbey, which always budded on the 24th, and blossomed on the 25th of December;" which, considering that the day was chosen by

the Fathers of the church at random, and that the calendar has been changed from the old to the new style, shows a remarkable perspicacity in both the animal and the vegetable! There is also a tradition of the church, preserved to us by Olaus, archbishop of Upsal, that, at the festival of Christmas, "the men, living in the cold Northern parts, are suddenly and strangely metamorphosed into wolves; and that, a huge multitude of them meet together at an appointed place and rage so fiercely against mankind, that it suffers more from their attacks than ever they do from the natural wolves." Metaphorically viewed, this would seem to be more than ever the case with men, and particularly with Christian nations, now. There seems no need to wait for Christmas-eve to see whole nations changed into "wild beasts"—especially in time of war.

Forum

DESIRABILITY OF CREMATION*

What theosophical reasons are there for preferring cremation to earth burial?

W. Q. Judge.—I find in the answer to this question which appeared in September, some statements regarding the Egyptians to which I would like to take exception on the ground that they cannot possibly be proved. It is said that because the Egyptians thought the soul could not gain its freedom until the body disintegrated, they therefore embalmed the body in order to chain the soul to it. I cannot agree to this at all. And all that we read of the aspirations for freedom and desire to be with the Gods which the Egyptians indulged in, would tend to show that if they knew how to allow the soul to gain its freedom they would not try to prevent it by making it stay in a mummy.

The answer then goes on to say that the soul being thus cut off from physical life and pent up in the body with its desires, it there had to fight its own nature, and if it did not succeed it had to fight again; this, the answer said, enabled the soul to have immense power upon its return to earth where it might achieve union (with the highest) without difficulty. It seems therefore from this that for a time at least it would be better to be a mummy than a man. I do not agree with the propositions made, they cannot be proved, and I do not think they can be shown to be anything more than fanciful; at present I do not know of any book or record in which there is any account or hint of this doctrine.

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* This answer by Mr. Judge to the question asked was first printed in *The Theosophical Forum* for October, 1895. The title used is our own. [Ed. Theosophy.]

THE LAST SONG OF THE SWAN*

"I see before my race an age or so,
And I am sent to show a path among the thorns,
To take them in my flesh.
Well, I shall lay my bones
In some sharp crevice of the broken way;
Men shall in better times stand where I fell,
And singing, journey on in perfect bands
Where I had trod alone. . . ."

THEODORE PARKER.

WHENCE the poetical but very fantastic notion—even in a myth—about swans singing their own funeral dirges? There is a Northern legend to that effect, but it is not older than the middle ages. Most of us have studied ornithology; and in our own days of youth we have made ample acquaintance with swans of every description. In those trustful years of everlasting sunlight, there existed a mysterious attraction between our mischievous hand and the snowy feathers of the stubby tail of that graceful but harsh-voiced King of aquatic birds. The hand that offered treacherously biscuits, while the other pulled out a feather or two, was often punished; but so were the ears. Few noises can compare in cacophony with the cry of that bird—whether it be the "whistling" *(Cignus Americanus)* or the "trumpeter" swan. Swans snort, rattle, screech and hiss, but certainly they do not sing, especially when smarting under the indignity of an unjust assault upon their tails. But listen to the legend. "When feeling life departing, the swan lifts high its head, and breaking into a long, melodious chant—a heart-rending song of death—the noble bird sends heavenward a melodious protest, a plaint that moves to tears man and beast, and thrills through the hearts of those who hear it."

Just so, "those who hear it." But who ever heard that song sung by a swan? We do not hesitate to proclaim the acceptation of such a statement, even as a poetical license, one of the numerous paradoxes of our incongruous age and human mind. We have no serious objection to offer—owing to personal feelings—to Fénélon, the Archbishop and orator, being dubbed the "Swan of Cambrai," but we protest against the same dubious compliment being applied to Shakespeare. Ben Jonson was ill-advised to call the greatest genius England can boast of—the "sweet swan of Avon;" and as to Homer being nicknamed "the Swan of Meander"—this is simply a posthumous libel, which LUCIFER can never disapprove of and expose in sufficiently strong terms.

Let us apply the fictitious idea rather to things than to men, by remembering that the swan—a symbol of the Supreme Brahm and one of the *avatars* of the amorous Jupiter—was also a symbolical type of cycles; at any rate of the tail-end of every important cycle in

*This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for February, 1890.

human history. An emblem as strange, the reader may think, and one as difficult to account for. Yet it has its *raison d'être*. It was probably suggested by the swan loving to swim in circles, bending its long and graceful neck into a ring, and it was not a bad typical designation, after all. At any rate the older idea was more graphic and to the point, and certainly more logical, than the later one which endowed the swan's throat with musical modulations and made of him a sweet songster, and a seer to boot.

The last song of the present "Cyclic Swan" bodes us an evil omen. Some hear it screeching like an owl, and croaking like Edgar Poe's raven. The combination of the figures 8 and 9, spoken of in last month's editorial, has borne its fruits already. Hardly had we spoken of the dread the Cæsars and World-Potentates of old had for number 8, which postulates the *equality of all men*, and of its fatal combination with number 9—which represents the earth *under an evil principle*—when that principle began making sad havoc among the poor Potentates and the Upper Ten—their subjects. The Influenza has shown of late a weird and mysterious predilection for Royalty. One by one it has levelled its members through death to an absolute equality with their grooms and kitchen-maids. *Sic transit gloria mundi!* Its first victim was the Empress Dowager of Germany; then the ex-Empress of Brazil, the Duke d'Aosta, Prince William of Hesse Philippstal, the Duke of Montpensier, the Prince of Swarzburg Rudolstadt, and the wife of the Duke of Cambridge; besides a number of Generals, Ambassadors, Statesmen, and their mothers-in-law. Where, when, at what victim shalt thou stop thy scythe, O "innocent" and "harmless" Influenza?

Each of these royal and semi-royal Swans has sung its last song, and gone "to that bourne" whence *every* "traveller returns," —the aphoristical verse to the contrary, notwithstanding. Yea, they will now solve the great mystery for themselves, and Theosophy and its teaching will get more adherents and believers among royalty in "heaven," than it does among the said caste on earth.

Apropos of Influenza—miscalled the "Russian," but which seems to be rather the scape-goat, while it lasts, for the sins of omission and commission of the medical faculty and its fashionable physicians—what is it? Medical authorities have now and then ventured a few words sounding very learned, but telling us very little about its true nature. They seem to have picked up now and then a clue of pathological thread pointing rather vaguely, if at all, to its being due to bacteriological causes; but they are as far off a solution of the mystery as ever. The practical lessons resulting from so many and varied cases have been many, but the deductions therefrom do not seem to have been numerous or satisfactory.

What is in reality that unknown monster, which seems to travel with the rapidity of some sensational news started with the object of dishonouring a fellow creature; which is almost ubiqui-

tous; and which shows such strange discrimination in the selection of its victims? Why does it attack the rich and the powerful far more in proportion than it does the poor and the insignificant? Is it indeed only "an agile microbe" as Dr. Symes Thomson would make us think? And is it quite true that the *influential* Bacillus (no pun meant) has just been apprehended at Vienna by Drs. Jolles and Weichselbaum—or is it but a snare and a delusion like so many other things? Who knoweth? Still the face of our unwelcome guest—the so-called "Russian Influenza" is veiled to this day, though its body *is* heavy to many, especially to the old and the weak, and almost invariably fatal to invalids. A great medical authority on epidemics, Dr. Zedekauer, has just asserted that that disease has ever been the precursor of cholera—at St. Petersburg, at any rate. This is, to say the least, a very strange statement. That which is now called "Influenza," was known before as the *grippe,* and the latter was known in Europe as an epidemic, centuries before the cholera made its first appearance in so-called civilized lands. The biography and history of Influenza, *alias* "grippe," may prove interesting to some readers. This is what we gather from authoritative sources.

The earliest visit of it, as recorded by medical science, was to Malta in 1510. In 1577 the young influenza grew into a terrible epidemic, which travelled from Asia to Europe to disappear in America. In 1580 a new epidemic of *grippe* visited Europe, Asia and America, killing *the old people, the weak and the invalids.* At Madrid the mortality was enormous, and in Rome alone 9,000 persons died of it. In 1590 the influenza appeared in Germany; thence passed, in 1593, into France and Italy. In 1658-1663 it visited Italy only; in 1669, Holland; in 1675, Germany and England; and in 1691, Germany and Hungary. In 1729 all Europe suffered most terribly from the "innocent" visitor. In London alone 908 men died from it the first week; upwards of 60,000 persons suffering from it, and 30 per cent. dying from catarrh or influenza at Vienna. In 1732 and 1733, a new epidemic of the *grippe* appeared in Europe, Asia and America. It was almost as universal in the years 1737 and 1743, when London lost by death from it, during one week, over 1,000 men. In 1762, it raged in the British army in Germany. In 1775 an almost countless number of cattle and domestic animals were killed by it. In 1782, 40,000 persons were taken ill *on one day,* at St. Petersburg. In 1830, the influenza made a successful journey round the world—that only time—as *the first pioneer* of cholera. It returned again from 1833 to 1837. In the year 1847, it killed more men in London than the cholera itself had done. It assumed an epidemic character once more in France, in 1858.

We learn from the St. Petersburg *Novoyé Vremya* that Dr. Hirsh shows from 1510 to 1850 over 300 great epidemics of *grippe* or *influenza,* both general and local, severe and weak. According

to the above-given data, therefore, the influenza having been this year very weak at St. Petersburg, can hardly be called "Russian." That which is known of its characteristics shows it, on the contrary, as of a most impartially cosmopolitan nature. The extraordinary rapidity with which it acts, secured for it in Vienna the name of *Blitz catarrhe*. It has nothing in common with the ordinary *grippe*, so easily caught in cold and damp weather; and it seems to produce no special disease that could be localized, but only to act most fatally on the nervous system and especially on the lungs. Most of the deaths from influenza occur in consequence of lung-paralysis.

All this is very significant. A disease which is epidemic, yet not contagious; which acts everywhere, in clean as in unclean places, in sanitary as well as in unsanitary localities, hence needing very evidently no centres of contagion to start from; an epidemic which spreads at once like an air-current, embracing whole countries and parts of the world; striking at the same time the mariner, in the midst of the ocean, and the royal scion in his palace; the starving wretch of the world's Whitechapels, sunk in and soaked through with filth, and the aristocrat in his high mountain *sanitarium*, like Davos in Engadin,* where no lack of sanitary arrangements can be taken to task for it—such a disease can bear no comparison with epidemics of the ordinary, common type, *e. g.*, such as the cholera. Nor can it be regarded as caused by parasites or microscopical microbes of one or the other kind. To prove the fallacy of this idea in her case, the dear old influenza attacked most savagely Pasteur, the "microbe-killer," himself, and his host of assistants. Does it not seem, therefore, as if the causes that produced influenza were rather cosmical than bacterial; and that they ought to be searched for rather in those abnormal changes in our atmosphere that have well nigh thrown into confusion and shuffled seasons all over the globe for the last few years—than in anything else?

It is not asserted for the first time now that all such mysterious epidemics as the present influenza are due to an abnormal exuberance of ozone in the air. Several physicians and chemists of note have so far agreed with the occultists, as to admit that the tasteless, colourless and inodorous gas known as oxygen—"the life supporter" of all that lives and breathes—does get at times into family difficulties with its colleagues and brothers, when it tries to get over their heads in volume and weight and becomes heavier than is its wont. In short—oxygen becomes ozone. That would account probably for the preliminary symptoms of influenza. Descending, and spreading on earth with an extraordinary rapidity, oxygen would, of course, produce a still greater combustion: hence the terrible heat in the patient's body and the paralysis of rather

* "Colonel the Hon. George Napier will be prevented from attending the funeral of his father, Lord Napier of Magdala, by a severe attack of influenza at Davos, Switzerland." —The *Morning Post* of January 21, 1890.

weak lungs. What says Science with respect to ozone: "It is the exuberance of the latter under the powerful stimulus of electricity in the air, that produces in nervous people that unaccountable feeling of fear and depression which they so often experience before a storm." Again: "the quantity of ozone in the atmosphere varies with the meteorological condition *under laws so far unknown to science.*" A certain amount of ozone is necessary, they wisely say, for breathing purposes, and the circulation of the blood. On the other hand "too much of ozone irritates the respiratory organs, and an excess of more than 1% of it in the air kills him who breathes it." This is proceeding on rather occult lines. "The real ozone is the Elixir of Life," says *The Secret Doctrine,* Vol. I. p. 144, 2nd foot-note.[1] Let the reader compare the above with what he will find stated in the same work about oxygen viewed from the hermetic and occult standpoint (*Vide* pp. 113 and 114, Vol. II.[2]) and he may comprehend the better what some Theosophists think of the present influenza.

It thus follows that the mystically inclined correspondent who wrote in *Novoyé Vremya* (No. 4931, Nov. 19th, old style, 1889) giving sound advice on the subject of the influenza, then just appeared—knew what he was talking about. Summarizing the idea, he stated as follows:— . . . "It becomes thus evident that the real causes of this simultaneous spread of the epidemic all over the Empire under the most varied meteorological conditions and climatic changes—are to be sought elsewhere than in the unsatisfactory hygienical and sanitary conditions. . . . The search for the causes which generated the disease and caused it to spread is not incumbent upon the physicians alone, but *would be the right duty of meteorologists, astronomers, physicists, and naturalists in general,* separated officially and substantially from medical men."

This raised a professional storm. The modest suggestion was tabooed and derided; and once more an Asiatic country—China, this time—was sacrificed as a scapegoat to the sin of FOHAT and his too active progeny. When royalty and the rulers of this sublunary sphere have been sufficiently decimated by influenza and other kindred and unknown evils, perhaps the turn of the Didymi of Science may come. This will be only a just punishment for their despising the "occult" sciences, and sacrificing truth to personal prejudices.

Meanwhile, the last death song of the cyclic Swan has commenced; only few are they who heed it, as the majority has ears merely not to hear, and eyes—to remain blind. Those who do, however, find the cyclic song sad, very sad, and far from melodious. They assert that besides influenza and other evils, half of the civilized world's population is threatened with violent death, this time thanks to the conceit of the men of *exact* Science, and

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[1] Original Edition—The matter in this foot-note appears in body of text on p. 168, New Edition. [Ed. THEOSOPHY.]

[2] Original Edition; p. 120 and 121, New Edition. [Ed. THEOSOPHY.]

the all grasping selfishness of speculation. This is what the new craze of "electric lighting" promises every large city before the dying cycle becomes a corpse. These are facts, and not any "crazy speculations of *ignorant* Theosophists." Of late Reuter sends almost daily such agreeable warnings as this on electric wires in general, and electric wires in America—especially:

Another fatal accident, arising from the system of overhead electric lighting wires, is reported to-day from Newburgh, New York State. It appears that a horse while being driven along touched an iron awning-post with his nose, and fell down as if dead. A man, who rushed to assist in raising the animal, touched the horse's head-stall and immediately dropped dead, and another man who attempted to lift the first, received a terrible shock. The cause of the accident seems to have been that an electric wire had become slack and was lying upon an iron rod extending from the awning-post to a building, and that the full force of the current was passing down the post into the ground. The insulating material of the wire had become thoroughly saturated with rain. (*Morning Post,* Jan. 21.)

This is a cheerful prospect, and looks indeed as if it were one of the "last songs of the Swan" of *practical* civilization. But, there *is* balm in Gilead—even at this eleventh hour of our jaw-breaking and truth-kicking century. Fearless clergymen summon up courage and dare to express publicly their actual feelings, with thorough contempt for "the utter humbug of the cheap 'religious talk' which obtains in the present day."* They are daily mustering new forces; and hitherto rabidly conservative daily papers fear not to allow their correspondents, when occasion requires, to fly into the venerable faces of *Cant,* and Mrs. Grundy. It is true that the subject which brought out the wholesome though unwelcome truth, in the *Morning Post,* was worthy of such an exception. A correspondent, Mr. W. M. Hardinge, speaking of Sister Rose Gertrude, who has just sailed for the Leper Island of Molokai, suggests that—"a portrait of this young lady should somehow be added to one of our national galleries" and adds:—

"Mr. Edward Clifford would surely be the fitting artist. I, for one, would willingly contribute to the permanent recording, by some adequate painter, of whatever manner of face it may be that shrines so saintly a soul. Such a subject—too rare, alas, in England—should be more fruitful than precept."[1]

Amen. Of precepts and tall talk in fashionable churches people have more than they bargain for; but of really practical Christ-like work in daily life—except when it leads to the laudation and mention of names of the would-be philanthropists in public papers—we see *nil.* Moreover, such a subject as the voluntary Calvary chosen by Sister Rose Gertrude is "too rare" indeed, anywhere, without speaking of England. The young heroine, like her noble predecessor, Father Damien,[2] is a true Theosophist in daily life and prac-

* Revd. Hugh B. Chapman, Vicar St. Luke's, Camberwell, in *Morning Post,* January 21st.

[1] *Loc cit.*

[2] *Vide* "Key to Theosophy," p. 239, what Theosophists think of Father Damien. (Original Edition, see p. 161 New Edition.—Ed. Theosophy.)

tice—the latter the greatest ideal of every genuine follower of the Wisdom-religion. Before such work, of practical Theosophy, religion and dogma, theological and scholastic differences, nay even esoteric knowledge itself are but secondary accessories, accidental details. All these must give precedence to and disappear before Altruism (real Buddha and Christ-like altruism, of course, not the theoretical twaddle of Positivists) as the flickering tongues of gaslight in street lamps pale and vanish before the rising sun. Sister Rose Gertrude is not only a great and saintly heroine, but also a spiritual mystery, an EGO not to be fathomed on merely intellectual or even psychic lines. Very true, we hear of whole nunneries having volunteered for the same work at Molokai, and we readily believe it, though this statement is made more for the glorification of Rome than for Christ and His work. But, even if true, the offer is no parallel. We have known nuns who were ready to walk across a prairie on fire to escape convent life. One of them confessed in an agony of despair that death was sweet and even the prospect of *physical tortures* in hell was preferable to life in a convent and its *moral* tortures. To such, the prospect of buying a few years of freedom and fresh air at the price of dying from leprosy is hardly a sacrifice but a choice of the lesser of two evils. But the case of Sister Rose Gertrude is quite different. She gave up a life of personal freedom, a quiet home and loving family, all that is dear and near to a young girl, to perform unostentatiously a work of the greatest heroism, a most ungrateful task, by which she cannot even save from death and suffering her fellow men, but only soothe and alleviate their moral and physical tortures. She sought no notoriety and shrank from the admiration or even the help of the public. She simply did the bidding of *her* MASTER —to the very letter. She prepared to go unknown and unrewarded in this life to an almost certain death, preceded by years of incessant physical torture from the most loathsome of all diseases. And she did it, not as the Scribes and Pharisees who perform their prescribed duties in the open streets and public Synagogues, but verily as the Master had commanded: alone, in the secluded closet of her inner life and face to face only with "her Father in secret," trying to conceal the grandest and noblest of all human acts, as another tries to hide a crime.

Therefore, we are right in saying that—in this our century at all events—Sister Rose Gertrude is, as was Father Damien before her—a *spiritual mystery*. She is the rare manifestation of a "Higher Ego," free from the trammels of all the elements of its Lower one; influenced by these elements only so far as the errors of her terrestrial sense-perceptions—with regard to religious form—seem to bear a true witness to that which is still human in her Personality—namely, her reasoning powers. Thence the ceaseless and untiring self-sacrifice of such natures to what appears *religious* duty, but which in sober truth is the very essence and *esse* of the

dormant Individuality—"divine compassion," which is "no attribute" but verily "the law of laws, eternal Harmony, Alaya's SELF."* It is this compassion, crystallized in our very being, that whispers night and day to such as Father Damien and Sister Rose Gertrude—"Can there be bliss when there are men who suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the others cry?" Yet, "Personality"—having been blinded by training and religious education to the real presence and nature of the HIGHER SELF—recognizes not its voice, but confusing it in its helpless ignorance with the external and extraneous Form, which it was taught to regard as a divine Reality—it sends heavenward and outside instead of addressing them inwardly, thoughts and prayers, the realization of which is in its SELF. It says in the beautiful words of Dante Rossetti, but with a higher application:

> . . . "For lo! thy law is passed
> That this my love should manifestly be
> To serve and honour thee;
> And so I do; and my delight is full,
> Accepted by the servant of thy rule."

How came this blindness to take such deep root in human nature? Eastern philosophy answers us by pronouncing two deeply significant words among so many others misunderstood by our present generation—*Maya* and *Avidya*, or "Illusion" and that which is rather the opposite of, or the absence of knowledge, in the sense of esoteric science, and not "ignorance" as generally translated.

To the majority of our casual critics the whole of the aforesaid will appear, no doubt, as certain of Mrs. Partington's learned words and speeches. Those who believe that they have every mystery of nature at their fingers' end, as well as those who maintain that official science alone is entitled to solve for Humanity the problems which are hidden far away in the complex constitution of man—will never understand us. And, unable to realize our true meaning, they may, raising themselves on the pattens of modern negation, endeavour, as they always have, to push away with their scientific mops the waters of the great ocean of occult knowledge. But the waves of *Gupta Vidya* have not reached these shores to form no better than a slop and puddle, and serious contest with them will prove as unequal as Dame Partington's struggle with the waters of the Atlantic Ocean. Well, it matters little anyhow, since thousands of Theosophists will easily understand us. After all, the earth-bound watch-dog, chained to matter by prejudice and preconception, may bark and howl at the bird taking its flight beyond the heavy terrestrial fog—but it can never stop its soaring, nor can our inner perceptions be prevented by our official and limited five senses from searching for, discovering, and often solving, problems hidden far beyond the reach of the latter—hence, beyond also the

* See "Voice of the Silence," pp. 69 and 71, old edition; pp. 73 and 75, new edition.

powers of discrimination of those who deny a sixth and seventh sense in man.

The earnest Occultist and Theosophist, however, sees and recognizes psychic and spiritual mysteries and profound secrets of nature in every flying particle of dust, as much as in the giant manifestations of human nature. For him there exist proofs of the existence of a universal Spirit-Soul everywhere, and the tiny nest of the colibri offers as many problems as Brahmâ's golden egg. Yea, he recognises all this, and bowing with profound reverence before the mystery of his own inner shrine, he repeats with Victor Hugo:

"Le nid que l'oiseau bâtit
Si petit
Est une chose profonde.
L'œuf, oté de la forêt
Manquerait
A l'equilibre du monde."

A QUESTION ON THE "EPITOME"*

In the Theosophical Siftings, *Vol. I., "Epitome of Theosophical Teachings," page 15, it says: "When the Adept has reached a certain very high point in his evolution he may by a mere wish, become what the Hindus call a* Deva*—or lesser god. If he does this, then, although he will enjoy the bliss and power of that state for a vast length of time, he will not at the next Pralaya partake of the conscious life 'in the bosom of the Father,' but has to pass down into matter at the next new 'creation,' performing certain functions that could not be now made clear, and has to come up again through the elemental world; but this fate is not like that of the black magician who falls into Avitchi." Now in what form does he pass into the next new creation and what is the work he has to do?*

W. Q. Judge—As I wrote the passage cited, I may properly reply. The very quotation shows that "the work he has to do" cannot be told, for, as I said, he would perform "certain functions that could not now be made clear." The whole matter is a reference to a very obscure doctrine, but little known, that if the Adept voluntarily takes the delights, pleasures and powers referred to, he is compelled, after millions of years of enjoyment, to reënter objective nature at the elemental stage. That is plainly related. So it is quite clear that the quotation as made answers the question put. This the questioner will see himself if he will rewrite, after his question at the foot, the whole of the statement quoted in the beginning.

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*This answer by Mr. Judge to the question asked was first printed in *The Theosophical Forum* of September, 1895. The title used is our own.—[ED. THEOSOPHY.]

FROM THE BOOK OF IMAGES

PARASAN was a sudra and the son of sudras before him, for a sudra may no more change his lot than a thistle its leaves.

Of a day, the wife of Parasan went away, leaving only her body. The ghât is not for the wives of sudras. Parasan being fortunate dwelt not far from the river, which is kind to all castes. Thither he bore the body of his wife, and at the place where she had been accustomed to wash garments, gave to the waters her old garment to be laved.

On returning from the river, the heart of Parasan was heavy and his mind was troubled with questions. The mind of a sudra is dull from little thinking, yet the Atman in Parasan is the same Atman that is in all. It was this Atman which made heavy his heart and troubled the mind of Parasan. Being but a sudra, Parasan thought not of the Atman that stirred in him.

"I am but a sudra and I am alone. I will ask questions of the fathers. They will quiet my mind, and my heart being heavy, I will sleep and in dreams I will not be alone."

So Parasan went to the hut of the head man. There the fathers of the village sat by the fire in grave silence.

"Masters, my wife is gone. My heart is heavy and my mind is troubled. Where now is my wife? Is she sudra still? Are there castes beyond Ganges?"

"The castes are one in death, but only a Brahmin may say what lies beyond death. The castes have always been in the world, like death. It is not for a sudra to question his lot, even in grief."

Parasan asked again: "Is not a vaisha a man to be envied? Is not his lot in life richer than ours, and in death his body goes to the pyre?"

"Toil at thine own task. In the field of a vaisha are many stones that a sudra is spared. Or even if a merchant, he also is sudra for profits. Those who purchase are his lords. Those who carry his ashes are as heavy of heart as thou with thy wife's body to bear to the river."

These things Parasan weighed, but with the mind of a sudra to which even a little thought is a great burden. As the Atman still troubled him he asked further of the fathers.

"The Kshatriya reaps, but he sows not. There have been no wars, yet of kshatriyas there are as many as in war. How is it karma that a kshatriya should be idle when others toil through the day, and in the night their labors spring up again for the morning?"

"The armor of the kshatriya is yet more heavy in peace than in war. He has wounds a sudra cannot see, and in death his body is food for vultures and for dogs. Neither the ghât nor the river

receive it. Mayhap for thy fault-finding hast thou been reborn in the body of a sudra. Be at peace. It is the will of the gods."

Then the Atman troubled him further, so that Parasan asked within himself, "Which is I, and which is my caste?" And his heart grew heavier and his mind saw no light.

"Fathers, what is this which I am, and this my body? Am I sudra, or is caste of the body? How can there be karma and also the will of the gods?"

The fathers reproved him gravely.

"These are not questions which the fathers of sudras can answer. Bring not shame on the fathers with vain questions. Respect for the elders is proper for sudras. These things are from old times. Our fathers before us have left us commandments. A sudra has but to obey to fulfill his duties. Duties being performed, there is peace. That thy heart is heavy and thy mind not at rest is a sign of sin. Only the Brahmins should speak of these things which thou askest. For thee, it is a sin. Sin no more, and peace will return."

Parasan went away. But his heart remained heavy and his mind knew no peace. Parasan thought this was sin, not knowing that the Atman moved within.

One day, as he toiled at his tasks, his head weaving from side to side in the monsoon of questions, he crossed before the shadow of a Brahmin returning from sacrifice in the temple. The Brahmin spat upon him, and pronounced a curse upon Parasan, upon his wife, upon his children, upon his fathers, and upon all sudras, for defiling the shadow of a Brahmin by crossing before it.

Parasan, being withdrawn into his heart and into his head, knew not that he had crossed the shadow of the Brahmin, nor heard he the curse pronounced, but only the sound of speaking. He raised his head and seeing that a Brahmin stood before him, and having heard the sound of speaking, Parasan addressed his questions to the Brahmin. For though it is not lawful for a sudra to touch a Brahmin, nor speak to a Brahmin, it is not sin for a sudra to make answer when a Brahmin has spoken.

"Master, I am a sudra whose wife is dead, and whose heart is heavy, and whose mind is troubled with questions. The fathers have said that only a Brahmin may speak of what lies beyond death. Who and what am I? When a sudra dies does caste die? Or when he returns into a body does caste wait for him here in the body?"

But the Brahmin, feeling himself defiled, cursed Parasan with a triple curse, naming the past, the present, and the future.

"Sudra thou hast been, chandala do I condemn thee in this moment, and pariah shalt thou be in thy dying. Go live with outcasts, and in death mingle thy bones with the dogs. Begone, accursed defiler."

So Parasan became an outcast, and the fathers were troubled no more.

"This comes of vain questions," said they. "It is evil karma for a sudra to question his lot. The gods turn from such. Parasan has been led by sin to defile a Brahmin. Thus has he lost his caste. The Pitris will no longer protect him, and in death he will not reach to the regions of Indra. Well for him if he become not a bhût."

Parasan being a pariah could enter no village and approach no person. If his shadow came nigh a path the children stoned him, lest he defile the four elements and bring sorrow upon their village. He wandered with wild dogs and with other pariahs, sharing their scraps and their bones.

These things troubled him not, but his heart remained heavy and in his mind questions pressed sorely. Yet seeing the miseries of others, though they knew not his, he became the sudra of outcasts, both of men and of dogs. Thus the dogs followed him, knowing not why, but receiving from him friendliness. Thus the lepers came to him, for he feared them not and was friendly. Thus the lepers and the sick amongst the pariahs followed him; receiving friendliness. Thus his tasks became great and his memory was not. Only his heart and his questions remained.

All this was the Atman in each, yet none knew it, for they were but dogs and outcasts, and Parasan the friend of the friendless.

On the day that his memory died, there came to the company of Parasan a new pariah. When at night the others had ceased from their sorrows in sleep, this pariah spoke to Parasan.

"Father of pariahs, let me serve thee."

Parasan answered him: "Thou art old and art feeble. Respect for the elders impels me. Friendliness for the feeble impels me. Thy need is greater than all. Take, then, this place where I lie, and repose thee, for the leaves have been warmed by my body."

After this, this ancient of pariahs spoke again to Parasan, saying:

"Can I not serve thee, who serves others?"

Then Parasan told of his heavy heart and his questions that pressed sore.

"What dost thou remember of thy past that has weighted thy heart and pressed sore thy mind?"

But Parasan, who had lost the memory of his own ills in serving the afflicted, remembered naught but the friendliness of his tasks as a sudra, naught but the great love of his wife, naught but the soft touch of his children, naught but the grave kindness of the fathers, naught but the love of the dogs and the pariahs. He knew not that it was the Atman who had ploughed the soil, and planted the seed, and tilled the new growth, and slain the weeds of false memory.

"Then why is the heart heavy and the mind oppressed?"

"It is because none can find peace but in sleep. It is because sorrow awaits all at the wakening. It is because love cannot conquer death. It is because none can point the way of life."

The Atman which spoke in the ancient of pariahs let fall the veil.

"Know, then, O Parasan, father of pariahs and friend of dogs, there are many who can point the way of life, but few to follow it."

"What is the way, Father of all that lives," asked Parasan, whose heart had grown luminous and whose mind saw the light, but knew not that it was from the Atman, "that I may follow it, thus to help thither all who suffer and all who die?"

"Only those who love, truly serve," answered the ancient; "only those who serve from love are troubled without ceasing by the Atman. The Self is in all and serves all, but only those know the Self who are lost in their love, so that memory of their own ills and sorrows dies, not to be born again. Thy love made the door for the Atman to enter thy heart. Thy service made the window for the Atman to trouble thy mind. Thy questions made the soil for the Atman to enrich with the dead weeds of caste and of memory. Thy humility has made ripe the harvest for those who know the truth. Ask thy Self thy questions and the Self will answer."

Then Parasan, looking inward with reverted gaze, found the Self of all that lives. His heart was no more heavy, and his mind was no more oppressed. The point of his heart grew luminous, and in his mind was light which cast no shadows, for his heart was pure and his mind clean. And in that light all things were, that have been, that are, and that will be. Seeing all, Parasan found the memory of the Self, the knowledge of the Self, the bliss of the Self.

Thus Parasan, Knower of the Self, saw all things in the Self, and the Self in all things. Thus he helps thither all who suffer and all who die.

This is the way of the Self, that all may find the Self.

So Parasan found the Self.

TURKISH PROVERBS*

Eat and drink with a friend, but do not trade with him.
He who wants a faultless friend, remains friendless.
He who wants the rose, must want the thorns also.
A sweet tongue draws the snake forth from the earth.
Without trouble one eats no honey.
Sacrifice your beard to save your head.

* This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for March, 1889.

STRAY THOUGHTS ON DEATH AND SATAN*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE THEOSOPHIST.

Madam,—Since you have published a posthumous letter of my Master and beloved friend, the late Eliphas Levi, I think it would be agreeable to you to publish, if judged suitable, a few extracts of the many manuscripts in my possession, written expressly for, and given to, me by my ever-regretted MASTER.

To begin, I send you—"Stray Thoughts on Death and Satan" from his pen.

I cannot close this letter without expressing the deep indignation aroused in me by the base diatribes published in the *London Spiritualist* against your Society and its members. Every honest heart is irritated at such unfair treatment, especially when proceeding from a man of honour as Mr. Harrison (Editor of the *Spiritualist*) who admits in his journal anonymous contributions that are tantamount to libels.

With the utmost respect,
I remain, Madam,
Yours Devotedly,
BARON J. SPADALIERI.

Marseilles, July 29, 1881.

Editor's Note.—It is with feelings of sincere gratitude that we thank Baron Spadalieri for his most valuable contribution. The late Eliphas Levi was the most learned Kabalist and Occultist of our age, in Europe, and every thing from his pen is precious to us, in so far as it helps us to compare notes with the Eastern Occult doctrines and, by the light thrown upon both, to prove to the world of Spiritualists and Mystics, that the two systems—the Eastern-Aryan, and the Western or the Chaldeo-Jewish Kabala—are one in their principal metaphysical tenets. Only, while the Eastern Occultists have never lost the key to their esoterism, and are daily verifying and elaborating their doctrines by personal experiments, and by the additional light of modern science, the Western or Jewish Kabalists, besides having been misled for centuries by the introduction of foreign elements in it such as Christian dogmas, dead-letter interpretations of the Bible, etc., have most undeniably lost the true key to the esoteric meaning of Simeon Ben Iochai's Kabala, and are trying to make up for the loss, by interpretations emanating from the depths of their imagination and inner consciousness. Such is evidently the case with J. K., the self-styled London "Adept," whose anonymous and powerless vilifications of the Theosophical Society and its members are pertinently regarded

* This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Theosophist* for October, 1881.

by Baron Spadalieri as "tantamount to libels." But we have to be charitable. That poor descendant of the Biblical *Levites*—as we know him to be—in his pigmy efforts to upset the Theosophists, has most evidently fractured his brain against one of his own "occult" sentences. There is one especially in the *Spiritualist* (July 22), to which the attention of the mystically inclined is drawn further down as this paragraph is most probably the cause of the sad accident which befell so handsome a head. Be it as it may, but it now disables the illustrious J. K. from communicating "scientifically his knowledge" and forces him at the same time to remain, as he expresses it "in an incommunicable ecstatic state." For it is in no other "state" that our great modern adept, the literary man of such a "calibre"* that to suspect him of "ignorance" becomes equal, in audacity, to throwing suspicion upon the virtue of Cæsar's wife—could possibly have written the following lines, intended by him, we believe, as a *lucid* and clear exposition of his own psycho-Kabalistic lore as juxtaposed to the "hard words," "outlandish verbiage" "moral and philosophical platitudes," and "jaw-breakers" of "the learned Theosophists."

These are the "gems of occult wisdom" of the illustrious Jewish Kabalist who, like a bashful violet, hides his occult learning under two modest initials.

"In every human creature there lies latent in the involitional part of the being a sufficient quantity of the omniscient, the absolute. To induce the latent absolute, which *is* the involitional part of our volitional conscious being, to become manifest, it is essential that the volitional part of our being should become latent. After the preparatory purification from acquired depravities, a kind of introversion has to take place; the involitional has to become volitional, by the volitional becoming involitional. When the conscious becomes semi-unconscious, the, to us, formerly unconscious becomes fully conscious. The particle of the omniscient that is within us, the vital and growing, sleepless, involitional, occult or female principle being allowed to express itself in the volitional, mental, manifest, or masculine part of the human being, while the latter remains in a state of perfect passivity, the two formerly dissevered parts become re-united as one holy (wholly) perfect being, and then the divine manifestation is inevitable." Very luckily, J. K. gives us himself the key to this grandiloquent gush: "necessarily" he adds, "this is only safely practicable while living in un-

* "To accuse a *literary man of my calibre* of ignorance, is as amusing a mistake as it would have been to charge Porson of ignorance of Greek," he writes in the *Spiritualist* of July 8. . . . "The occult is my special subject, and . . . *there is but little . . . that I do not know*," he adds. Now, the above sentence settles the question at rest with us. Not only an *"adept"* but no layman or profane of the most widely recognized intellect and ability, would have ever *dared*, under the penalty of being henceforth and for ever regarded as the most ridiculously conceited of—Æsopus' heroes—to use such a sentence when speaking of himself! So stupidly arrogant, and cowardly impertinent has he shown himself behind the shield of his initials to far better and more worthy men than himself, in his transparent attacks upon them in the above-named *Spiritualist*—that it is the first and certainly the last time that we do him the honour of noticing him in these columns. Our journal has a nobler task, we trust, than to be polemizing with those, whom in vulgar parlance the world generally terms—*bullies*.—ED. THEOS.

compromisingly firm purity, for otherwise there is danger of *unbalancement—insanity*, or a questionable form of *mediumship*."

The italics are ours. Evidently with our *immaculate* "adept" the "involitional, occult or *female* principle" was *not* allowed to "express itself in the volitional, mental, manifest, or masculine part" of his being, and—behold the results!!

For the edification of our Hindu readers, who are unprogressive enough to refuse reading the lucubrations of "J. K." or follow the mental "grand trapeze" performed by this remarkable "Adept" on the columns of the *Spiritualist*, we may add that in the same article he informs his English readers that it is "Hindu mystification, acting on Western credulity" which "brought out the Theosophical Society." "Hindu philosophy" according to that great light of the nineteenth century is no "philosophy" but "rather mysticism." . . . "Following the track of the mystifying and mystified Hindus they (the Theosophists) consider the four above faculties (Sidhis of Krishna) Anima, Mahima, Laghima and Garima to be the power they (we) have to strive for." "Indeed, what a ludicrous confusion of effect with cause"!

The fracture of the brain must have been serious indeed. Let us hope that timely and repeated lotions of "Witch-Hazel" or "the Universal Magic Balm" will have its good effects. Meanwhile, we turn the attention of our Hindu readers and students of Occultism to the identity of the doctrines taught by Eliphas Levi (who, too, is contemptuously sneered at, and sent by the "Adept" to keep company with "Brothers," Yogis, and "Fakirs") in every essential and vital point with those of our Eastern initiates.

I.

DEATH.

BY (THE LATE) ELIPHAS LEVI.

Death is the necessary dissolution of imperfect combinations. It is the re-absorption of the rough outline of individual life into the great work of universal life; only the perfect is immortal.

It is a bath in oblivion. It is the fountain of youth where on one side plunges old age, and whence on the other issues infancy.[1]

Death is the transfiguration of the living; corpses are but the dead leaves of the Tree of Life which will still have all its leaves in the spring. The resurrection of men resembles eternally these leaves.

Perishable forms are conditioned by immortal types.

All who have lived upon earth, live there still in new exemplars of their types, but the souls which have surpassed their type receive elsewhere a new form based upon a more perfect type, as

[1] Rebirth of the *Ego* after death. The Eastern, and especially Buddhistic doctrine of the evolution of the new, out of the old *Ego*.—Ed. Theos.

they mount ever on the ladder of worlds*; the bad exemplars are broken, and their matter returned into the general mass.†

Our souls are as it were a music, of which our bodies are the instruments. The music exists without the instruments, but it cannot make itself heard without a material intermediary; the immaterial can neither be conceived nor grasped.

Man in his present existence only retains certain predispositions from his past existences.

Evocations of the dead are but condensations of memory, the imaginary coloration of the shades. To evoke those who are no longer there, is but to cause their types to re-issue from the imagination of nature.[1]

To be in direct communication with the imagination of nature, one must be either asleep, intoxicated, in an ecstacy, cataleptic, or mad.

The eternal memory preserves only the imperishable; all that passes in Time belongs of right to oblivion.

The preservation of corpses is a violation of the laws of nature; it is an outrage on the modesty of death, which hides the works of destruction, as we should hide those of reproduction. Preserving corpses is to create phantoms in the imagination of the earth[2]; the spectres of the night-mare, of hallucination, and fear, are but the wandering photographs of preserved corpses. It is these preserved or imperfectly destroyed corpses, which spread, amid the living, plague, cholera, contagious diseases, sadness, scepticism and disgust of life.[3] Death is exhaled by death. The cemeteries poison the atmosphere of towns, and the miasma of corpses blight the children even in the bosoms of their mothers.

Near Jerusalem in the Valley of Gehenna a perpetual fire was maintained for the combustion of filth and the carcasses of animals, and it is to this eternal fire that Jesus alluded when he says that the wicked shall be cast into *Gehenna*; signifying that dead souls will be treated as corpses.

The Talmud says that the souls of those who have not believed in immortality will not become immortal. It is faith only which gives personal immortality[4]; science and reason can only affirm the general immortality.

The mortal sin is the suicide of the soul. This suicide would occur if the man devoted himself to evil with the full strength of his

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*From one *lokka* to the other; from a positive world of causes and activity, to a negative world of effects and passivity.—ED. THEOS.

†Into Cosmic matter, when they necessarily lose their self-consciousness or individuality, or are annihilated, as the Eastern Kabalists say.—ED. THEOS.

[1] To ardently desire to see a dead person is to *evoke* the image of that person, to call it forth from the astral light or ether wherein rest photographed the images of the *Past*. That is what is being partially done in the *seance-rooms*. The Spiritualists are unconscious NECROMANCERS.—ED. THEOS.

[2] To intensify these images in the astral or sidereal light.—ED. THEOS.

[3] People begin intuitionally to realize the great truth, and societies for burning bodies and *crematories* are now started in many places in Europe.—ED. THEOS.

[4] Faith and *will-power*. Immortality is conditional, as we have ever stated. It is the reward of the pure and good. The wicked man, the material sensualist only survives. He who appreciates but physical pleasures will not and *cannot* live in the hereafter as a self-conscious Entity.—ED. THEOS.

mind, with a perfect knowledge of good and evil, and an entire liberty of action which seems impossible in practice, but which is possible in theory, because the essence of an independent personality is an unconditioned liberty. The divinity imposes nothing upon man, not even existence. Man has a right to withdraw himself even from the divine goodness, and the dogma of eternal hell is only the assertion of eternal free-will.

God precipitates no one into hell. It is men who can go there freely, definitively and by their own choice.

Those who are in hell, that is to say, amid the gloom of evil* and the sufferings of the necessary punishment, without having absolutely so willed it, are called to emerge from it. This hell is for them only a purgatory. The damned completely, absolutely and without respite, is Satan who is not a rational existence, but a necessary hypothesis.

Satan is the last word of the creation. He is the end infinitely emancipated. He willed to be like God, of which he is the opposite. God is the hypothesis necessary to reason, Satan the hypothesis necessary to unreason asserting itself as free-will.

To be immortal in good, one must identify oneself with God; to be immortal in evil, with Satan. These are the two poles of the world of souls; between these two poles vegetate and die without remembrance the useless portion of mankind.

Editor's Note.—This may seem incomprehensible to the average reader, for it is one of the most abstruse of the tenets of Occult doctrine. Nature is dual: there is a physical and material side, as there is a spiritual and moral side to it; and, there is both good and evil in it, the latter the necessary shadow to its light. To force oneself upon the current of immortality, or rather to secure for oneself an endless series of rebirths as conscious individualities—says the Book of Khiu-te Vol. XXXI., one must become a co-worker with nature, either for *good* or for *bad,* in her work of creation and reproduction, or in that of destruction. It is but the useless drones, which she gets rid of, violently ejecting and making them perish by the millions as self-conscious entities. Thus, while the good and the pure strive to reach *Nipang (nirvana* or that state of *absolute* existence and *absolute* consciousness—which, in the world of finite perceptions, is *non*-existence and *non*-consciousness)—the wicked will seek, on the contrary, a series of lives as conscious, definite existences or beings, preferring to be ever suffering under the law of retributive justice rather than give up their lives as portions of the integral, universal whole. Being well aware that they can never hope to reach the final rest in pure spirit, or *nirvana*, they cling to life in any form, rather than give up that "desire for life," or *Tanha* which causes a new aggregation

* That is to say, they are reborn in a "lower world" which is neither "Hell" nor any theological purgatory, but a world of nearly absolute *matter* and one preceding the last one in the "circle of necessity" from which "there is no redemption, for there reigns *absolute* spiritual darkness." (Book of Khiu-te.)—Ed. Theos.

of *Skandas* or individuality to be reborn. Nature is as good a mother to the cruel bird of prey as she is to the harmless dove. Mother nature will punish her child, but since he has become her co-worker for destruction she cannot eject him. There are thoroughly wicked and depraved men, yet as highly intellectual and acutely *spiritual* for evil, as those who are spiritual for good. The *Egos* of these may escape the law of final destruction or annihilation for ages to come. That is what Eliphas Levi means by becoming "immortal in evil," through identification with Satan. "I would thou wert *cold* or *hot,*" says the vision of the *Revelation* to St. John (III. 15-16). "So then because thou art *lukewarm* and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." The *Revelation* is an absolutely *Kabalistic* book. Heat and cold are the two "poles," *i. e.*, good and evil, *spirit* and *matter*. Nature *spues* the "lukewarm" or "the useless portion of mankind" out of her mouth, *i. e.*, annihilates them. This conception that a considerable portion of mankind may after all not have immortal souls, will not be new even to European readers. Coleridge himself likened the case to that of an oak tree bearing, indeed, millions of acorns, but acorns of which under nominal conditions not one in a thousand ever developed into a tree, and suggested that as the majority of the acorns failed to develop into a new living tree, so possibly the majority of men fail to develop into a new living entity after this earthly death.

II.
SATAN.

Satan is merely a type, not a real personage.

It is the type opposed to the Divine type, the necessary foil to this in our imagination. It is the factitious shadow which renders visible to us the infinite light of the Divine.

If Satan was a real personage then would there be two Gods, and the creed of the Manicheans would be a truth.

Satan is the imaginary conception of the absolute in evil; a conception necessary to the complete affirmation of the liberty of the human will, which, by the help of this imaginary absolute seems able to equilibrate the entire power even of God. It is the boldest, and perhaps, the sublimest of the dreams of human pride.

"You shall be as Gods knowing good and evil," saith the allegorical serpent in the Bible. Truly to make evil a science is to create a God of evil, and if any spirit can eternally resist God, there is no longer one God but two Gods.

To resist the Infinite, infinite force is necessary, and two infinite forces opposed to each other must neutralize each other.* If

* And evil being infinite and eternal, for it is coeval with matter, the logical deduction would be that there is neither God nor Devil—as personal Entities, only One Uncreated, Infinite, Immutable and Absolute Principle or Law: EVIL or DEVIL—the deeper it falls into matter, GOOD *or* GOD as soon as it is purified from the latter and re-becomes again pure unalloyed Spirit or the ABSOLUTE in its everlasting, immutable Subjectivity.—ED. THEOS.

resistance on the part of Satan is possible the power of God no longer exists, God and the Devil destroy each other, and man remains alone; he remains alone with the phantom of his Gods, the hybrid sphynx, the winged bull, which poises in its human hand a sword of which the wavering lightnings drive the human imagination from one error to the other, and from the despotism of the light, to the despotism of the darkness.

The history of mundane misery is but the romance of the war of the Gods, a war still unfinished, while the Christian world still adores a God in the Devil, and a Devil in God.

The antagonism of powers is anarchy in Dogma. Thus to the church which affirms that the Devil exists the world replies with a terrifying logic: then God does not exist; and it is vain to seek escape from this argument to invent the supremacy of a God who would permit a Devil to bring about the damnation of men; such a permission would be a monstrosity, and would amount to complicity, and the god that could be an accomplice of the devil, cannot be God.

The Devil of Dogmas is a personification of Atheism. The Devil of Philosophy is the exaggerated ideal of human free-will. The real or physical Devil is the magnetism of evil.

Raising the Devil is but realizing for an instant this imaginary personality. This involves the exaggeration in one's self beyond bounds of the perversity of madness by the most criminal and senseless acts.

The result of this operation is the death of the soul through madness, and often the death of the body even, lightning-struck, as it were, by a cerebral congestion.

The Devil ever importunes, but nothing ever gives in return.

St. John calls it "the Beast" *(la Bête)* because its essence is human folly *(la Bêtise humaine)*.

Eliphas Levi's *(Bonæ Memoriæ)* creed, and that of his disciples.

We believe in a God-Principle, the essence of all existence, of all good and of all justice, inseparable from nature which is its law and which reveals itself through intelligence and love.

We believe in Humanity, daughter of God, of which all the members are indissolubly connected one with the other so that all must co-operate in the salvation of each, and each in the salvation of all.

We believe that to serve the Divine essence it is necessary to serve Humanity.

We believe in the reparation of evil, and in the triumph of good in the life eternal. FIAT.

AROUND THE TABLE

IT is understood that whosoever gathers with the clan at night around our living-room table is liable to interruption, whether his book be diverting or profound. Mother is strong on the side of "human nature."; Big Brother contributes the clever or satirical—often it's politics; Student gives us enough of Yeats, or Masefield, or Galsworthy to make us want to read them in quiet; thanks to Spinster's choice bits we all pass for "well-informed" in music, art, and drama! As for Doctor and Mentor, they are quite likely to dig out some thread from the depths of the *Secret Doctrine,* and set us all dangling at their heels, in a veritable abyss of thought—though we can catch a glimmer of light now and then that keeps us hanging on, eager to touch the flame.

Last evening Mother spoke up in no mild indignation:

"People, this is an October magazine. Do you mean to say you read it and failed to call my attention to this story of Willa Sibert Cather's? It's seldom one finds a magazine story worth reading, I know, but however satisfactory in other respects this story may be, here is a keenness of character analysis that is notable. The story is of Cressida, the one star in an otherwise obscure family. Just listen to this:

> The truth was that all the Garnets, and particularly her two sisters, were consumed by an habitual, bilious, unenterprising envy of Cressy. They never forgot that, no matter what she did for them or how far she dragged them about the world with her, she would never take one of them to live with her in her Tenth Street house in New York. They thought that was the thing they most wanted. But what they wanted, in the last analysis, was to *be* Cressida. For twenty years she had been plunged in struggle, fighting for her life at first, then for a beginning, for growth, and at last for eminence and perfection. During those twenty years the Garnets had been comfortable and indolent and vastly self-satisfied; and now they expected Cressida to make them equal sharers in the rewards, spiritual, as well as material, of her struggle. They coveted the qualities which had made her success, as well as the benefits which came from it.

"Just hasn't she put her scalpel on envy and ingratitude, Doctor?"

"Yes, indeed," agreed Doctor, appreciatively. "A queer thing, isn't it, that those two always go together? People who have the qualities which enable them to give are never envious, no matter how much more others may do; they are too busy giving. Those who take most are usually even resentful that others' *have* qualities, which *they* could put to so much greater advantage,—for themselves, of course. Yet they do miserably with the qualities they already have."

"Well," Mentor took it up, "we can see that these defects arise from ignorance—lack of soul-perception—lack of realization of the fact of Law in the universe. How can a man be envious of anyone, if he knows nothing can keep him from his own; that no one *can* have what does not belong to him? I suppose it is pride

that makes us unready to acknowledge our poor deservings; and others' richer earnings indicate a quality which we have not. Their excellencies are a reproach to us. We want to appear before others better than they are. Short in the possession of qualities we would like to have, envy of them in others springs up, accompanied even by hate. There would be only joy in the grateful heart that another had earned such meritorious Karma. It resolves itself into a question of soul-quality, don't you think?"

"Well," Big Brother sat up a little. "Should you say that the ignorant day-laborer who is unenvious and grateful, has greater soul-quality than an educated man who is envious and ungrateful?"

"Indeed, I should!" warmly replied Mentor. "Another incarnation would show, if this one doesn't, a higher status even outwardly in that day-laborer. In his own class, in fact, you will find much envy and ingratitude. The lack of those qualities and the presence of their opposites in an individual indicate a moral elevation above the class."

"Do you know, Mentor," thoughtfully began Doctor, "I believe that gratitude is the very highest of qualities. At least we had good evidence of it as a quality of Masters, in the early days of Theosophy."

"Oh, you mean," Mentor took him up, "when Messrs. Sinnett and Hume thought they could run the Theosophical Society so much better than H. P. B. and Col. Olcott did? Yes, they had authority in letters and science! Against that authority, what were devotion and sacrifice alone? The world would take notice, if the Masters made *them* their agents! But the Masters calmly told them that ingratitude was not one of their vices."

"Will you not hear this other bit, too?" asked Mother, picking up her magazine again.

In her undertakings, in whatever she could lay hold of with her two hands, she was successful; but whatever happened to her was almost sure to be bad. She lived, more than most of us, "for others," and what she seemed to promote among her beneficiaries was indolence and envy and discord—even dishonesty and turpitude.

"Now Mother," Spinster teased, "you are always telling us that motive and motive alone fixes the quality of our acts. How does that square with what you have just read?"

Mother looked appealingly at Mentor, as she said, "Well, it did determine their quality, so far as Cressida was concerned."

"Yes," added Mentor. "As she saw the results, no doubt she saw where she made mistakes of judgment. That is how we grow discrimination, isn't it? And discrimination is the knowledge which enables us to do real good and not harm to those we would benefit. That "good" is very often not at all what people *want*, of course. I can imagine the very greatest brotherly kindness, on occasion, to be a club! If Cressida made mistakes in judgment with a good motive,—not for the smug satisfaction of being able to say—'See, what *I* have done!'—the good motive will lead her to

right knowledge; nor is it concerned with the wrong use others make of it. Ah, but it's the saddest thing I know, that so few are able to be helped without weakening of the moral fibre."

"You are dealing with the individual problem in Cressida, Mentor," said the Doctor. We were wondering what Doctor would have to say—being on many Boards of charitable organizations.

"Yes, but that after all is the only problem there is. Curious how we arraign the nation, the government—and yet it's we, ourselves, as individuals who make up the nation and government. Precisely where organized charity fails is in its work of relief being given over to paid workers, who are dealing with *cases,* not souls—not individuals."

"Would you then do away with charitable organizations?" asked Doctor.

"Certainly not, so long as there are people in the world who can't see a better line of charitable work, and who will serve in that way. Good is done in any sincere effort."

"Well, Mentor," Mother suggested. "Isn't there any general safeguard against these hosts of individual failures of ours, while we are acquiring discrimination?"

"I was just thinking that perhaps most mistakes are made by going out of our way to hunt objects of benefaction, by looking after the dangerous duty of another. If the problem comes straight to *us,* the Law has brought it as our individual opportunity. After that, we can only do according to our best discrimination, but we can do that personally, as soul to soul."

"Do you mean you'd then hand out a tract, Mentor?" asked Big Brother bantering.

"Well, young man, there might be a case where that would be just the thing to do. Don't you believe for one moment in a hard and fast rule for any line of human conduct! But whatever I did in the way of food, or money, or clothes, I would realize was only a momentary palliative—and I'd look for the causes of the particular misery, before I could expect to give any real help."

"My experience is that it's mighty hard to cure causes, though," Doctor spoke with conviction. "The causes are up to the man himself—and he expects his physician to do his work for him!"

"Now, Doctor," nodded Mother, "isn't that corroboration of what Mentor always insists on? Of course, the hand that smites us is our own. We must acknowledge that 'the Law' is the law of our own being, and obey it. Instead of that, we are always trying to evade it!"

"And make someone else the scapegoat!" chuckled Doctor. "Well, for that we have to thank our old anthropomorphic outside God and that blasphemous atonement dogma."

No telling what other long-rolling terms of condemnation Doctor might have launched forth—we knew by his eye he had warmed to the subject—but the telephone for him broke in on us, and the tide was stemmed for the evening.

PREVALENT HABITS OF READING*

THERE are several hindrances to the doing of good work by individuals, with resulting loss to the movement. These are all surmountable, for hindrances that are insurmountable are nature's own limitations that can be used as means instead of being left as barriers. One of these surmountable and unnecessary hindrances is the prevalent habit of reading trashy and sensational literature, both in newspaper and other form. This stupifies and degrades the mind, wastes time and energy, and makes the brain a storehouse of mere brute force rather than what it should be—a generator of cosmic power. Many people seem to "read from the pricking of some cerebral itch," with a motive similar to that which ends in the ruin of a dipsomaniac: a desire to deaden the personal consciousness. Sensation temporarily succeeds in drowning the voice of conscience and the pressure that comes from the soul that so many men and women unintelligently feel. So they seek acute sensation in a thousand different ways, while others strive to attain the same end by killing both sensation and consciousness with the help of drugs or alcohol. Reading of a certain sort is simply the alcohol habit removed to another plane, and just as some unfortunates live to drink instead of drinking that they may live, so other unfortunates live to read instead of reading that they may learn how to live. Gautama Buddha went so far as to forbid his disciples to read novels—or what stood for novels in those days—holding that to do so was most injurious. People are responsible for the use they make of their brains, for the brain can be used for the noblest purposes and can evolve the most refined quality of energy, and to occupy it continually with matters not only trivial but often antagonistic to Theosophical principles is to be untrue to a grave trust. This does not mean that the news of the day should be ignored, for those who live in the world should keep themselves acquainted with the world's doings: but a fair test is that nothing not worth remembering is worth reading. To read for the sake of reading, and so filling the sphere of the mind with a mass of half-dead images, is a hindrance to service and a barrier to individual development.

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* This extract formed a portion of an article entitled "The Screen of Time", written by Wm. Q. Judge, and first printed in *Theosophy*—successor to *The Path*, for April, 1896. The title given it is our own. [ED. THEOSOPHY]

FROM THE NOTE BOOK OF AN UNPOPULAR PHILOSOPHER*

THOUGHTS
ON THE BIRTHDAY OF LUCIFER.

Ever Onward.

IN its ceaseless and, also, too rapid flight along the path of Eternity, Time has taken one mighty stride more: a step of twelve months' duration toward the last day of our present age; also of the lives of many of us within, and of all of us beyond —the ultimate frontier of our senile century. In twelve years more the curtain will have dropped, shutting out the foot-lights from the actors and all the latter from the public view. . . .

It is only then that many a scene enacted in the sad drama of life, and many an hitherto misunderstood attitude of some of the chief actors in that Mystery of the Age called Theosophy and its Societies, will appear in its true light.

The Verdict of Posterity.

In those days of the forthcoming age Solomon shall sit in judgment over David. The century that shall be born shall pass its sentence over the century which is now fast dying. And, the grandchildren of the modern theosophists will have to find a verdict for, or against their sires. What shall it be? Perhaps, there are those who know, but who of them shall tell! Those who can see into the womb of futurity and could prophesy, keep aloof from the sneers of the Philistines. In our days of Iconoclasm and prosaic realism he is no philosopher—not even an "unpopular" one—who dabbles in things unseen. Let us abstain, since Theosophists are denied the privileges granted to certain astrologers—let us rather render to Cæsar that which belongs to Cæsar; the full homage due to the eminent virtues which characterize our age. How glaringly its bright image falls on the dark screen of the Past! what a contrast between its Christian purity, fortitude, charity, chastity and unselfishness, and the vices and dissipation of—say—its long departed predecessor, the age of the Imperial and Pagan Rome! This is affirmed in scores of works, preached from thousands of pulpits. What will be the *impartial* opinion of Century XX. about its predecessor is easy to see. Our historians are the sons and descendants of those patristic biographers who made of the Emperor Julian an apostate, and of Constantine a Saint. Fear not then the verdict of thy immediate posterity, O Century XIX. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy womb, in any case. For, whether that fruit be green or over-ripe, godly or diabolical, so long as thy rotten civilisation goes on producing historians, so long shall thy policy of plunder and bloodshed be called civic and mili-

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* This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for September, 1888.

tary virtues, and sham, lie and hypocrisy stand proclaimed as Sparto-Christian ethics.

Our "Morning Star."

LUCIFER is one year old this month. The child is growing and waxing strong in Spirit—if not altogether as much in wisdom, as one might like it. Its temper is often complained of, and it has made enemies. But its friends are many, and in certain parts of the world it is petted and even spoiled—temper notwithstanding. Our baby is teething, in truth, and therefore subject at times to fits of pessimism and biting. But its humour will soften down with age; and as material for its food is gradually collecting for the second year, it may yet be proved, even to its enemies, a precocious and well-informed, if even an unwelcome child.

A Wicked Charge.

Meanwhile some subscribers have thought fit to throw a shadow on his second birthday. LUCIFER, they say, does not live up to its promises; *i. e.*, it does not sufficiently "bring to light the hidden things of darkness" concerning the Book of God and the "friends of God," the Jewish Patriarchs. Payne Knight and Inman have done so far, more fully and efficiently, etc., etc.

Respected Subscribers! LUCIFER is Venus only in astronomy; nor have its editors ever bargained to equal, far less surpass, in the exposition of phallic mysteries, Inman and Payne Knight, or even their miniature *"Bijou"* edition, Hargrave Jennings. The methods used by these gentlemen are, no doubt, very scientific; but, they are too realistic and too crude and too one-sided for us to follow. If people will have truth, then, of course, the "hidden things of darkness" in the Sinaitic Symbology have to be unveiled. Let us then *re-reveal* Revelation by all means.

But why should we go out of our way to use the Bible as a colonial store of spices with which to flavour our Western viands, or turn LUCIFER into a Scotland Yard detective staff for patriarchal delinquents? The amorous debates of the *dramatis personæ* in Pentateuchal esotericism, are very well in archæological works of research, but entirely out of place in a theosophical magazine. LUCIFER is intended to review, and preach modern not ancient ethics, and metaphysical as against materialistic philosophy. The *faux pas* of Lot and David, "the friends of God," belong, together with the poetical glyphs of "fish," "heel" and "thigh," to scriptural symbology. It was an archaic attempt at feline cleanliness, and speaks rather in favour than to the detriment of the authors of the revealed book. Those who prefer naked sincerity of language, are asked to turn to the Prophets.

The Age of Ovid or Hosea?

The word of the "Lord" unto Hosea, the son of Beeri, was surely addressed to our age of civilization. The latter is truly the

reincarnation of the docile prophet, who, acting upon the advice of his God, loves "a woman beloved of her friends, yet an adulteress," looks to many gods and loves "flagons of wine."

What have we to envy in the "stiff-necked" people of Israel? From its Sodom and Gomorrah, its worship of the Golden Calf, the innocent pastimes of King Solomon, down to the practice and policy of those whom the Christian Saviour addressed as the "generation of vipers," we are the worthy followers of the "chosen people." We have made of the "upper ten" our high places wherein we worship, and the symbology of modern society is of as concealing a nature as that of the Biblical writers. Their symbology pales before ours. The magic wand of our century transforms in its astuteness everything under the sun into something else, in social, political and daily life. The hideous marks of moral leprosy are made to appear as glorious scars from wounds received on the battlefield of honour; black tresses are changed into yellow hair, and the adipose tissue of carrion metamorphosed into the poor man's butter. We live in days of a moral (alias immoral) *féerie,* in which every Mr. Hyde puts on the mask of Dr. Jekyll. It is the latter who is the symbolism of our age, and the former its ever more and more irrepressible tendency. Thus the cloak of esotericism, which modern society, the representative and key-note of the average population in every nation, throws over its sins of commission and omission, is as thick as Biblical symbolism. Only the two have changed and inverted their *rôles;* it is the external cloak of ancient symbolism which has become the inner life and true aspirations of modern Mrs. Grundy.

Then and Now.

To the adept versed in the modern society-symbolism the allegories of old become like unto a transparent artifice of an innocent infant when confronted with and brought face to face with the Machiavelistic craft and cunning of what we know as Society-ways. The two symbols of modern culture respectively referred to as RELIGIOUS CANT and Drawing room PROPRIETY have reached a practical perfection under their mask, undreamt of by the Rebekahs and Jezebels, the Jacobs and even Solomons of old. They have become the two exotic, gigantic plants of modern culture. Therefore is it that LUCIFER refuses to follow in the footsteps of our modern Symbologists. He believes that the muddy water of the "Rivers of (modern) Life," ought to receive more attention than the "Rivers of (ancient) Life." The modern revealer of the archaic "things of darkness" is too much coloured with the general tendency of the age to be more than one-sided, and therefore he can hardly be correct in the interpretation of its symbolism. He sees in the smooth dark waters of these "Rivers" the reflection of his own century, when he does not actually mirror himself personally, in them. Hence, he perceives everywhere phallic worship;

and primitive symbolism can represent to his distorted fancy nought but what he would find in it. Why give preference to imagined over real events? The Ahabs and Jezebels who kill the prophets are as plentiful in our day as in the days of old. The modern Mrs. Potiphar, finding no Joseph to offend her, expends her slanderous energies to the detriment of her best "lady friends." Sweet are her whispers into the greedy ear of Janus-faced Grundy, who, nodding her venerable head, listens to them drinking slander like heavenly dew. The modern Lot requires not to be made drunk with wine to give a mother to Moab; the XIXth Century Epopees repeat on a grander scale the adventures of Helen and Sita. Only Homer and Valmiki have now made room for Zola, and the modern literature of the realistic school in France, puts to blush by the sincerity of its language all the private dialogues of the "Lord" with his prophet Hosea. What have we to envy in the ancients?

Where are we going to?

Ahimé! We live in strange and weird times. Ours are the days of Sheffield plating on the moral plane. True silver has almost gone out of use and has fallen, like the Indian rupees, far below par. This is not a time for golden rules, for people prefer moral pinchbeck. Nature, as well as man, seems to crack on all her seven seams, and the universal screws have assuredly got loose somewhere, if not everywhere, on their hinges, after the fashion of this earth. Paradox flourishes and axioms are running to seed. Nature and man vie with each other in shams. The Lord God of our state religions is proclaimed a god of mercy, of peace and love, and at the same time he is a "man of war"; "the Lord our God" who "fights for Israel." "Thou shalt not kill," says the commandment; and on this principle improvements in murderous, man-killing engines are being invented by the "humble" servants of the said Power—for a consideration. Rev. F. Bosworth, a *man of God and peace,* has just been rewarded by the paternal Government with a premium of £2,000, for "the advancement of gunnery science."

Esoterically explained, this "advancement" means, I suppose, in political symbology a cannon possessing a ten-fold greater power and rapidity for killing the bodies of one's enemies, than the fulmination of Church canons for killing their enemies' souls. Hence, the reward to ingenious parsons. Every Christian nation is busy now with preparing guns and rifles superior to those possessed by its neighbours. Duels fought between two nations seem to be judged by a different code of honour from those between two individuals. Battles won by *trickery,* are laid down to "military genius" and regarded as "the poetical and imaginative side of the war." (*Fortnightly Review,* Lord Wolseley). Trickery in commercial or private business is punished with hard labour. In the former case,

the cunning and unexpected employment of weapons of superior murderousness and devilish cruelty are lauded and their successful use made to bring the highest military honours; whereas the private antagonist who uses an unequal weapon or takes an unfair advantage in any way is counted a murderer and a felon. So, statesmen who "lie for their country's good" and derive benefits for it by foul deception have promotion and honours; while their less culpable imitator who plays with marked cards and loaded dice, or "pulls" a race, is scourged out of decent company. So chronic and congenital is our obtuseness, that we have never yet been able to distinguish the one moral baseness from the other. But to a reflective philosopher, the difference between such a modern statesman or general and a modern blackleg and a coward is imperceptible.

Still more puzzling!

And what of the inventive and Reverend "Bosworths"? Have they become so familiarized with the Salvation Army motto of "blood and fire" as to be led to pass by an easy transition to their actual shedding and use on the physical plane? They pray and repent and glorify their Lord and therefore fear nought for themselves. They are the modern Ahabs of whom the word of the Lord came to Elijah, the Tishbite, saying:—"Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? *because of that, I will not bring the evil in his days; but in his* (innocent) *son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.*" (I Kings xxi. 29.)

Therefore do the Reverend "Bosworths" snap their fingers at *Karma* and say:—*"Après moi le deluge."*

Why, then, should any one object to help toward the glory of one's country through human butchery and rivers of blood? What harm can befall any one through it, provided he only *humbles* himself before the "Lord" like Ahab? And do not both the belligerent armies pray? Does any such human slaughter on a battle field begin without that Lord being almost simultaneously addressed and implored for help by both parties? . . .

Query:—Does the kind and merciful Father in Heaven—one with Him, we are taught, who said that "he who kills with the sword shall perish with the sword"—listen to both sides, or to one? And can even He, to whom all is possible, perform the miracle of sending victory to both his humble petitioners? To which of the two does the good God listen? Is it to the weakest of the two, or to the strongest? O, Problems of the Age! Who can solve them save his grace the Archbishop of Canterbury? But he will hardly pay any attention to an "unpopular philosopher" who is not even a conservative member of Parliament. What great general was it who said that Providence was always on the side of the heaviest battalions?

By their Fruits shall ye know them.

What is the difference between a devout Christian and an Atheist? The problem was philosophically solved by a little girl in the United States. The anecdote is told by one who heard it himself—"Our mutual friend,"—the very popular American, Edmund Russel.

On the day before the funeral of Peter Cooper—the late millionaire and philanthropist—at New York, Mr. Russel went to a "bakeshop." Three little girls were serving behind the counter. It was a holiday in the city, as every one was preparing to honour the memory of one of the people's benefactors by following the procession.

"Only to think!" reflectively said one of the girls. "He," (meaning Peter Cooper) "owned a whole pew in church and never went inside one."

"Well," replied another, "he was perhaps a Unitarian?"

"No he was not," put in the third girl. "He was a philanthropist."

"Oh dear no," groaned the first that had spoken. "He was an Atheist."

To which the youngest of all the three begged to be informed of the meaning of that term. "Well, and what is an Atheist anyhow?" she asked.

"An Atheist," gravely explained the eldest—"means a man *who believes in doing all the good he can in this world and taking his chance in the next.*"

Uncanny Signs.

The outlook for the British Isles is hopelessly depressing. *La boule à cancans* ("Gossip ball"), as Anatole France calls our mother earth, is losing her spin, and the Cosmic dynamo is emptying itself. The worst of all is, that we do not know who to hold responsible. What ails the divine COSMOCRATORES? India is exporting her superfluous *"monsoon* clouds" to Europe *via* Port Said, and the rain-God seems to have permanently established his sprinkling machine over Great Britain. Siberia sends her hyperborean frosts to the southwards, and herself flirts with the tropics. Kangaroos have appeared in Surrey; and parrots may soon be heard warbling their saw-filing *staccato,* and birds of paradise sun their jewelled plumes on palm trees in Archangel. Everything evidently is upside down, the times are out of joint, and the screws of the Cosmic "Carpenter" are working loose. In vain our men of Science waste their Greek and Latin over the problem. What is it, what can the matter be? What makes all this sidereal and terrestrial "tohu-bohu" *à la mode,* of Chaos? The Globe is shrinking, we hear; and the firmament thickening with foreign matter of all sorts. The ceaseless soot and smoke from millions of chimneys, furnaces, railway engines and other fires may perchance have angered the Powers above. Naturally enough, for they must

object to being smoked out of their Swargas and Walhallas and other pleasant detached Elysiums, by the products of incomplete fuel-combustion. As for our poor mother Earth, what with the ever extending mines, canals, and tunnels, aqueducts, drains, sewers and subways, her venerable hide is becoming so honey-combed as to resemble the skin of a morphiomaniac addicted to subcutaneous injections.

How long she will suffer her robust flanks to be thus scarified, who can tell? The astrologer on the staff of the *Pall Mall Gazette* has just prophesied that October will bring us terrible disasters, floods, houses falling and earthquakes.

Woe to London if the latter should happen, for at the first strong shock every tall mansion within the seismic area will crumble into its own basement and cellar; at the second all the streets sink into the subways; and at the third the four and a half millions of houseless people will find themselves hoisted into cerulean space, *en route* for the starry land of Silence, by the explosion of all the gas, steam, dynamite and other expansive products of modern ingenuity. We doubt if there will be a sufficient number of ready-made wings and golden harps in stock against the *dies iræ*. But it is at least consoling to feel that there will be ample fire and brimstone for all who are "predestined" by God to migrate to tropical regions.

For myself I confess my utter incapacity to know where this exact line will be drawn. Perhaps some Daniel among our subscribers may be able to "come to judgment." Is it only Presbyterians who can be saved? The conundrum is sufficient to puzzle any philosopher when he reads something like the following, which we copy, *verbatim*, from the original handbill sent us by an American friend. The scene is at Baraboo, Wisconsin:

LAWN PARTY
At the Residence of
MRS. R. H. STRONG,
For the Benefit of the
EPISCOPAL BUILDING FUND,
Under the Auspices of
4—FOUR YOUNG GENTLEMEN—4
Of the Congregation.

On Wednesday Eve, July 18th.

HAMMOCKS,
ICE-CREAM,
ATTRACTIVE YOUNG LADIES
AND A VERY WARM WELCOME!
Gates open at 8 o'clock.

The Episcopal Church is the American section of the Church of England; its bishops are just now preaching over here, in our cathedrals, and sitting in conclave at Lambeth Palace. What will his grace of Canterbury say to the new plan of raising funds for Church building? Is it immoral for publicans to hire "pretty barmaids" to dispense "something hot" across the counter, but moral for Episcopalians to employ "attractive young ladies" and "hammocks" to give a "very warm welcome" to visitors "under the auspices of four young gentlemen of the congregation"? LUCIFER shrouds his face in his mantle to hide the blush which his ignorance excites. He recalls the memories of previous incarnations when, as Venus, he saw the sacred mysteries debased into the lascivious rites of Venus-Astarté, wherein the highest ladies gave themselves to increase the revenues of the Temple, and the *Kadeshuth* of the Jews (*Vide* 2 Kings xxiii. 7) performed the ignoble duties of the depraved Vallobecharyas of India!

Meanwhile, join us in wishing many happy returns of his birthday to LUCIFER, "Son of the Morning." May he grow to equal in profundity his elder brother, the THEOSOPHIST of Madras; in suavity and graciousness his elder sister the PATH, of New York; and in combative zeal and daring the LOTUS which flourishes on the banks of the Seine. LUCIFER is just in time to salute the fledgling of the Theosophical literature the *Hestia,* which our brother, Mr. Sturdy, has just founded in New Zealand as a local organ of Theosophy.

That nothing should be wanting to make the birthday pleasant, our tireless old President Founder, patriarchal beard and the rest, turns up on a special mission of peace and organization confided to him by the Executive Council at Adyar. A less cool and patient man might well despair of pouring oil upon the troubled waters of European theosophy through which our ship has been labouring during the past twelve months.

Floréat Adyar.

SOME SCIENTIFIC QUESTIONS ANSWERED*

[A letter was recently received by the Editor from one of our most eminent Australasian Fellows, asking some questions in science of such importance that the replies are, with permission, copied for the edification of our readers. The writer is a Chela who has a certain familiarity with the terminology of Western science. If we mistake not, this is the first time that the rationale

* This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Theosophist* for October, 1883.

of the control exercised by an Adept Occultist over the relations of atoms, and of the phenomena of the "passage of matter through matter," has been so succinctly and yet clearly explained.—*Ed.*]

REPLIES TO PROF. ———'S QUESTIONS.

(1) The phenomenon of "osmosing" (extracting. *Ed.*) your note from the sealed envelope in which it was sewn with thread, and substituting for it his own reply, without breaking either seal or thread, is to be considered first. It is one of those complete proofs of the superior familiarity with and control over atomic relations among our Eastern Adepts as compared with modern Western men of science, to which custom has made me familiar. It was the same power as that employed in the formation of the letter in the air of your room at ——; in the case of many other air-born letters; of showers of roses; of the gold ring which leaped from the heart of a moss-rose while held in ——'s hand; of a sapphire ring doubled for a lady of high position here, a short time ago, and of other examples. The solution is found in the fact that the "attraction of cohesion" is a manifestation of the Universal Divine Force, and can be interrupted and again set up as regards any given group of atoms in the relation of substance by the same Divine power as that localised in the human monad. Atma, the eternal spiritual principle in man, has the same quality of power over brute force as has the Universal Principle of which it is a part. Adeptship is but the crown of spiritual self-evolution, and the powers of spirit develope themselves successively in the ratio of the aspirant's progress upward, morally and spiritually. This you see is to place our modern Evolution Theory upon a truly noble basis, and to give it the character of a lofty spiritual, instead of a debasing materialistic, philosophy. I have always felt sure of the warm approval of the most intuitional of your Western men of science when they should come to take this view of our Aryan Arhat Science.

You should not find much difficulty in drawing the line between the "Spook" and the "Adept." The latter is a living man often fit to stand as the grandest ideal of human perfectibility; the former is but undissolved congeries of atoms recently associated in a living person as his lower—or better, his coarser, and more materialistic —corporeal envelopes; which during life were confined in the outermost shell, the body, and after death released to linger for a while in the astral (Etheric or *Akasic*) strata nearest the earth's surface. The law of magneto-vital affinities explains the attraction of these "shells" to places and persons; and if you can postulate to yourself a scale of *psychic specific gravity*, you may realise how the greater density of a "soul" weighted with the matter of base (or even unspiritual, yet not animal) feelings would tend to impede its rising to the clear realm of spiritual existence. Though I am conscious of the imperfection of my scientific exegesis, I feel that

your superior capacity for apprehending natural laws, when a hint has been given, will fill all lacunæ.

Note that no Adept even can disintegrate and reform any organism above the stage of vegetable: the Universal *Manas* has in the animal begun and in man completed its differentiation into individual entities: in the vegetable it is still an undifferentiated universal spirit, informing the whole mass of atoms which have progressed beyond the inert mineral stage, and are preparing to differentiate. There is movement even in the mineral, but it is rather the imperceptible quiver of that Life of life, than its active manifestation in the production of form—a ramification which attains its maximum not, as you may suppose, in the stage of physical man, but in the higher one of the Dhyan Chohans, or Planetary Spirits, *i. e.,* once human beings who have run through the scale of evolution, but are not yet re-united, or coalesced with Parabrahma, the Universal Principle.

Before closing, a word more about the "passage of matter through matter." Matter may be defined as condensed Akasa (Ether); and in atomizing, differentiates, as the watery particles differentiate from superheated steam when condensed. Restore the differentiated matter to the state *ante* of undifferentiated matter, and there is no difficulty in seeing how it can pass through the interstices of a substance in the differentiated state, as we easily conceive of the travel of electricity and other forces through their conductors. The profound art is to be able to interrupt at will and again restore the atomic relations in a given substance: to pull the atoms so far apart as to make them invisible, and yet hold them in polaric suspense, or within the attractive radius, so as to make them rush back into their former cohesive affinities, and recompose the substance. And since we have had a thousand proofs that this knowledge and power is possessed by our Adept Occultists, who can blame us for regarding as we do those Adepts as the proper masters in science of the cleverest of our modern authorities? And then, as I above remarked, the outcome of this Philosophy of the Aryan Sages is to enable humanity to refresh the moral and awaken the spiritual nature of man, and to erect standards of happiness higher and better than those by which we now govern ourselves.

ON THE LOOKOUT

In a prominently displayed interview published in the Los Angeles *Examiner* of October 14, the Rev. Charles F. Aked declares, "The church is not holding its own anywhere in the civilized world." Mr. Aked was formerly an English divine, coming to this country to take charge of the Fifth Avenue Baptist church in New York City. Subsequently he presided over the destinies of the First Congregational church of San Francisco, which he left to become a member of the Ford peace commission. He has been well-known for years on the lecture platform. Mr. Aked goes on in his interview to say:

> "Year by year the statistics of Great Britain show a decline in all denominations. The same is true of Germany, and true, too, of France and all of Catholic Europe. The churches are practically deserted. They have only a few women in them. The same is true, too, of America."

Dr. Aked finds the chief influences against church-going to be the automobile and the motion picture show! When asked what is to be the solution of the church's problem, this was the reply:

> "If I could tell that I'd be the prophet of my generation. The brainiest men in all of the churches are asking that question with headache and heartache in their asking."

However nubilous and unsatisfactory Dr. Aked's perception of the cause of the decline of organized religion he has eyes to see and ears to hear the fact of that decline. Yet now as always, as H. P. B. stated it in *Isis Unveiled:*

> "Human nature feels an intuitional yearning for a Supreme Power. Without a God the cosmos would seem to it but like a soulless corpse. Being forbidden to search for Him where alone His traces would be found, man filled the aching void with the personal God whom his spiritual teachers built up for him from the crumbling ruins of heathen myths and hoary philosophies of old. How otherwise explain the mushroom growth of new sects, some of them absurd beyond degree? Mankind have one innate, irrepressible craving, that *must* be satisfied in any religion that would supplant the dogmatic, undemonstrated and undemonstrable theology of our Christian ages. This is the yearning after the proofs of immortality. The solution of the great problem of *eternity* belongs neither to religious superstition nor to gross materialism."

The myriads of living Egos who no longer give the slightest allegiance to "the dogmatic, undemonstrated and undemonstrable theology" of the organized sects miscalled Christian have, necessarily, fallen into religious superstition or gross materialism. What else could they do? Born in the church it taught them nothing. The stone of a dogmatic "revelation" and an impossible atonement offered in satisfaction of the yearning after the proofs of immortality—what else could it meet but rejection in minds that, however ignorant, are yet free from the chains that the temporal power of the church was so long able to impose? Spiritual subjection, which once filled the churches to overflowing, was not due to threats of after-death punishment; it was due to the ability immediately to inflict earthly punishment on the refractory questioner of the dogmas propounded. Small wonder that multitudes now feed the "mushroom growth of new sects," even though many of them "are absurd beyond degree"—Christian Science, for example. They at least appeal to the *human* nature, here and now, of the prospective proselyte—and it is an appeal, not a threat. None of the new growths is as yet strong enough to call in the rack, the jail, and the sword and the anathema as "ministering angels" to its propagation or maintenance. Small wonder that other multitudes fall into gross materialism. Finding the only pabulum they know of

to be but a stone, they fall victim to the gospel of immediate enjoyment. Knowing naught of soul, they make haste to garner such fruits of bodily and mental comfort or intoxication as may be available while yet body and mind hold together. In that same *Isis* H. P. B. wrote:

> "The doctrine of Metempsychosis has been abundantly ridiculed by men of science and rejected by theologians, yet if it had been properly understood in its application to the indestructibility of matter and the immortality of spirit, it would have been perceived that it is a sublime conception. Between these two conflicting Titans—Science and Theology—is a bewildered public, fast losing all belief in man's personal immortality, in a deity of any kind, and rapidly descending to the level of a mere animal existence. Such is the picture of the hour, illumined by the bright noon-day sun of this Christian and scientific era!"

Alone, the soul-satisfying doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation offer to humanity hope and *proof* of his continuing consciousness through all changes of body, of scene and of circumstance, and his own responsibility *to himself* for all his actions. And the time was never more ripe than now for theosophists of all organizations and of none, to teach, preach and practise their philosophy in the presence of a humanity that is in desperate need of it.

Under the title of "Evolution and Man," Mr. Maynard M. Metcalf, of the Orchard Laboratory of Oberlin, Ohio, contributes an interesting study to *The Journal of Heredity*. Mr. Metcalf sees clearly in America that "melting pot of the races" of which H. P. Blavatsky so frequently spoke, and discerns within the brief century of the Republic's existence the beginnings of those racial contacts which, "it seems, must be sufficient in time to cause fusion of all races into one. Of course, to the biologist, accustomed as he is to think of evolution in periods of geologic time, a thousand years are as one day. The amalgamation of the races of man into one race . . . will, doubtless, take a few thousand years to accomplish, but, as far as we can judge from the conditions now existing and those seemingly necessarily about to come, such union of the races seems inevitable." Mr. Maynard himself does not hesitate to "think in periods of geologic time," for in the course of his observations he refers to the present heterogeneous tribes of men as "the development during the last half million years of so many races of men . . . through isolation." One can but experience a retrospective smile at the thought of this "half million years" in contrast with the six thousand years allotted by good Bishop Usher as the life period of this earth since the "Lord God" of Genesis "created" all things and found them "good," however they seem to have deteriorated in the interval. The biblical chronology thus definitely determined as six "days" of a thousand years each, still adorns the margins of all orthodox editions of the scriptures. Modern science, casting off these theological swaddling clothes, was able to conceive of a manless earth throughout interminable ages, but its boldest speculators, until quite recently, hesitated at a margin of human existence more remote than a few score thousands of years. Mr. Maynard, naturally, since those are the spectacles of the moment, sees great possibilities and probabilities in "guiding" the forthcoming evolution of a resultant race through eugenics and genetics, and the *deus ex machina* of ultimate fusion in the freedom of communication and the breaking down of the barriers of isolation. His vision is, of course, entirely physical, and does not include in its perspective the breaking down of metaphysical barriers, nor adjudge of significance the wide intermingling of religious and moral ideas. Apparently, he does not see the melting of individualism, of nationalism, of religionistic exclusiveness, nor the emergence into the field of race consciousness of the great ideas of spiritual identity and spiritual evolution, which students of the *Secret Doctrine* know

to be the cause and the guiding force behind these ante-natal movements of the Sixth Sub-Race, whose birth, as Mr. Maynard intuitively grasps, "will, doubtless, take a few thousand years to accomplish." Mr. Maynard's article is significant as a "sign of the times."

George Moore's, "The Brook Kerith," is one of the most interesting works under the heading of fiction, of the early fall publications. It is a substantial volume of close type, and runs into some five hundred pages of solid matter. It is superfluous to comment on the perfection of Mr. Moore's style which is always a revelation of dynamic simplicity. The book flows on with that easy grace, that fascinatingly perfect choice of words, that subtle irony, which is peculiarly his, and it has, moreover, a restraint that distinguishes it from his other works. "The Brook Kerith" is spoken of as a life of Christ, but it will not be a popular gift-book for the Christmas trade. It is as entirely free from the accepted Christmas card idea of "The Saviour" as its cover design is free from holly wreaths and golden crosses. Even to people of unorthodox, wide-open mind, however, Mr. Moore's imagination outfictions fiction in making of the Master Jesus a self-deceived enthusiast! We could more easily forgive the questionable taste than the lamentable lack of understanding and knowledge which this conception involves. The story would have gained much by the use of fictitious characters.

Yet the book is not free from wholesome reminders for us all. It is a pathetically familiar and natural picture we see of the disciples, able only dimly to comprehend the great soul they try to follow; hitching sorry little wagons to his starry flights, unable to cut loose from earthy travelling, and ruefully examining the bruises that are the result. The ever dwelling on the personal, the "how-does-this-affect-me?" and "when-do-I-get-my-reward?" attitude; their bickerings and dissensions are amusing, and they are something more if we so wish. Disciples do not change very greatly in two thousand years. It is still as difficult to transcend the material, evidently, to be unconcerned with personality as in the days of Peter, James, and John, who quarreled as to who should have the right hand chair in Kingdom Come.

The striking incident of the book is the development that Jesus was living when taken down from the cross for dead, was revived in the tomb, and taken by Joseph of Arimathea to his home on the outskirts of Jerusalem, and there nursed back to life. His complete disappearance gave rise to the story of the resurrection of the body, which spread and magnified.

Upon his recovery he was conveyed in all secrecy to a brotherhood he had belonged to before becoming imbued with the idea that he was the Messiah. Here in this cenoby, far from the world, he lives to old age, tending sheep, and praised as the most skillful shepherd in all the country. Alone with his flocks he grows to feel that it was the voice of pride that told him he was the Messiah; he suffers remorse for much of his teaching that he felt had been hard and cold.

Paul, escaping from an angry mob reaches the cenoby, after Jesus has been living there many years, with his story of the resurrection. He talks for hours to the brothers, telling of his travels, how he has been persecuted, and the glory of the vision of Jesus Christ who appeared to him and told him to preach the gospel to all men.

Jesus declares himself to Paul as that Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified by the Jews and says:

> "In my teaching I wandered beyond our doctrines and taught that this world is a mock, a sham, a disgrace, and that naught was of avail but repentance. . . . I should have remained an Essene shepherd following my flocks in the hills, . . . I fear to think of the things I said at that time but I must speak of them. My teaching grew more and more violent. It is not peace, I said, that I bring to you but a sword, and I come as a brand wherewith to set the world in flame. I

said that I came to divide the house; to set father against mother, brother against brother, sister against sister. . . . I was so exalted by the many miracles I had performed by the power of God or the power of a demon, I know not which, that I encouraged my disciples to speak of me as the son of David, though I knew myself to be the son of Joseph the carpenter . . . pride lifted me above myself . . . one evening I took bread and broke it, saying that I was the bread of life that came down from heaven and that whosoever ate of it had everlasting life given him. . . . And it was while asking God's forgiveness for my blasphemies that the emissaries and agents of the priests came and took me prisoner."

Paul considers Jesus a mad man, one obsessed, and refuses to allow this disclosure to interfere with his belief in his own vision. Jesus prepares to go to Jerusalem, but on the way decides that it would be useless to try to tell the people the truth. The book ends with a long conversation between Jesus and Paul, wherein Jesus says:

"God forbid that I should say banish God from thy heart. God cannot be banished for God is in us. All things proceed from God; all things end in God; God like all the rest is a possession of the mind. He who would be clean must be obedient to God. God has not designed us to know him except through our own conscience. Each man's conscience is a glimpse. These are some of the things I have learnt, Paul, in the wilderness during the last twenty years. But seek not to understand me, thou canst not understand me and be thyself; but, Paul, I can comprehend thee for once I was thou."

So Paul, who is presented as the well-intentioned fool, goes on his way rejoicing, and sowing the seeds of dissension from which have proceeded the various "Christian" dogmas.

As Paul leaves Jesus, sure that he will do nothing to interfere with his teaching, he turned and . . . saw people suddenly in a strange garb going toward the hillside on which he had left Jesus; . . . and turning to a shepherd standing by, he heard that the strangely garbed people were monks from India. Paul thinks that Jesus will join the monks and return to India with them. We are not told whether Paul is more astute in this matter than in others.

Mr. Moore has quite overlooked the fact that reincarnation was part of the Jewish teaching, of which Jesus must have been cognisant, and certainly no Christian could protest more loudly than the Theosophist the small range of knowledge accorded Jesus in "The Brook Kerith." Paul, too, is sadly belittled; we are loath to think the writer of the Epistles was so much a fool, when his writings bear evidence that he was an Initiate! Mr. Moore is ever the artist rather than the propagandist of any particular "truth," so that he leaves us a little vague as to his intentions at times. But in spite of this we have a compelling story, with food for thought.

Within the past month we have noted in newspapers and periodicals of widely differing characters references and comments regarding a statement in Mr. J. Henry Harper's book, *The House of Harper*. The statement is to the effect that in a number of Amelie Rives' (Princess Troubetskoy) stories the scenes are laid in the England of three centuries ago, and the language and phraseology is archaic and Elizabethan with a remarkable fidelity. On asking the author about the matter she said that she had given the epoch no study, but in fact wrote "out of her head," and that in one of the stories she found she had used a word whose meaning she did not know and of whose existence she was unaware. On looking it up in the dictionary she found that such an archaic word actually was current in the period of the story and that she had employed it in its correct meaning. Mr. Harper adds that Miss Rives ascribed the whole matter to pre-existence. *The House of Harper* was

published in 1912, and it seems to us worthy of note that after so many years, when considered from the standpoint of the longevity of the ordinary anecdotal volume, this reminiscence should have a renaissance, and attain a wide currency. In the same connection, it may be remarked that the religious press is giving more and more attention to the subject of pre-existence; once, as we have had occasion to say, a common doctrine in many of the early Christian congregations. Some of these articles seriously favor the early belief; others bitterly oppose it as unorthodox and unchristian. But even the latter are a tacit confession that there is a strong revival of inquiry and a turning to this theory as affording a rational explanation of some of the mysteries of existence.

Those who finished the last installment of "The Mysterious Stranger" in November *Harper's* are still marvelling that they so little suspected in dear old laughter-making Mark Twain the leaning toward the occult and mystical, which this posthumous tale reveals. Nor were they prepared to look on him as a prophet—yet, here in a remarkable picture of the history of civilization from the Garden of Eden down, he certainly foresees our present holocaust in Europe. Satan—a conjuror—magician (whom we recognize as the devil, or more than wise, according to our "lights") is speaking:

> "And always we had wars, and more wars, and still other wars—all over Europe, all over the world . . . but never a war started by the aggressor for any clean purpose—there is no such war in the history of the race."

Then, showing as an exhibit of the future, slaughters more terrible, more devastating engines of war, than any before, he said:

> "You perceive that you have made continual progress. Cain did his murder with a club; . . . the Christian has added guns and gunpowder; a few centuries from now . . . all men will confess that without the Christian civilization war must have remained a poor and trifling thing to the end of time. . . .
>
> "It is a remarkable progress . . . high civilizations have risen, flourished, commanded the wonder of the world, then faded out and disappeared; and not one of them except the latest ever invented any sweeping and adequate way to kill people. They all did their best, to kill being the chiefest ambition of the human race and the earliest incident in its history, but only the Christian civilization has scored a triumph to be proud of. Two or three centuries from now it will be recognized that all the competent killers are Christian; then the pagan will go to school to the Christian—not to acquire his religion, but his guns." . . .

The fine satire of his treatment of Christian Science is easily recognized, of course, but he takes on a deeper note at the close of the book—suggestive withal of the subtle phrasings of the Upanishads.

> "There is no other" (life than this—because life never ceases). "Life itself is only a vision, a dream." "Nothing exists save empty space—and you!" (The Perceiver) . . . "you are but a thought." "Strange! that you should not have suspected years ago—centuries, ages, eons ago!—for you have existed, companionless, through all the eternities. Strange, indeed, that you should not have suspected that your universe and its contents were only dreams. . . . You perceive that they are pure and puerile insanities, the silly creations of an imagination that is not conscious of its freaks—in a word, that they are a dream and *you the maker of it.* The dream-marks are all present; you should have recognized them earlier."